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# *Venice*

*by  
G. Pauli*



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VENICE



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# VENICE

BY

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TRANSLATED BY

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1904

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Fig. 1. The Piazzetta with its Buildings (Mint, Library, Campanile and Doges' Palace) seen from the Giudecca. Before the fall of the Campanile.

FROM the interior of a house it is justifiable to draw conclusions upon the character of its inhabitants. The same applies to the dwelling of a large community, to a town, and particularly to an Italian town. At an early date already the towns of Italy, favoured by the developement of the national economy of their country, had grown into centres of culture in the highest sense. They face each other as mighty, self-centred individuals, each separated from the others by a thousand peculiarities of customs and language. But none of them is as homogenous in character as Venice, for here antiquity has left no traces to influence the forms of later centuries; here there have been comparatively few struggles in the sphere of home policy, not to speak of national economy. During the whole tenure of her life this town, which possessed to a high degree the power of growing into a state, was, on the contrary, ruled by identical interests. With unexampled continuity these interests could develop and come to their end, since her position made Venice appear a safe asylum. Protected in the west by the Adriatic swamps, she had in the East the open sea, where only a naval power could become dangerous. But during the whole middle ages and far into modern times no

rivals could maintain their superiority over the Venetians. This made it possible, that no enemy's foot trod the soil of the town from its foundation to its fall. It would be difficult to find another example, where the influence of politics and of national economy upon culture and art would be as clearly perceptible as in Venice.

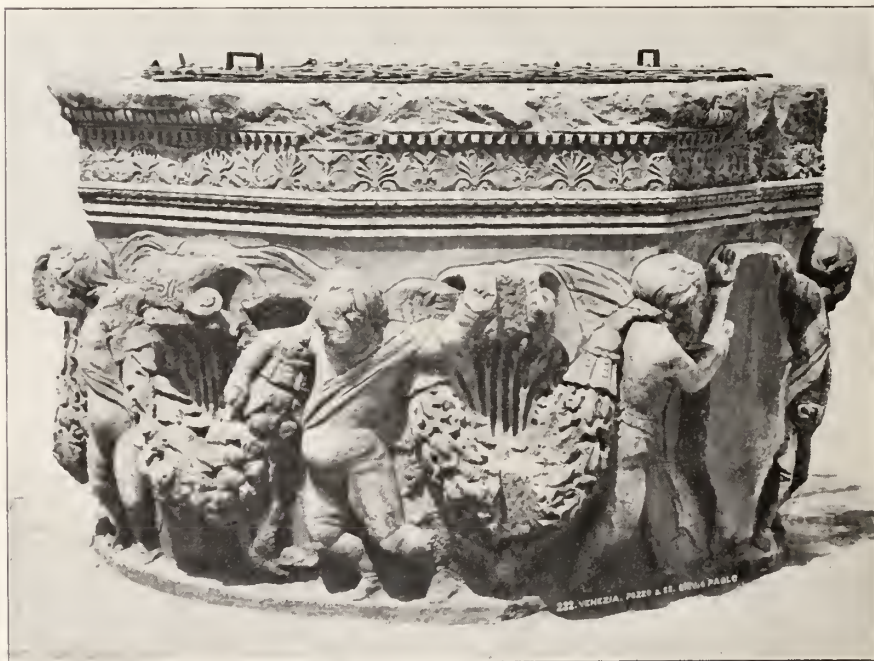


Fig. 2. Font at S. Giovanni e Paolo.



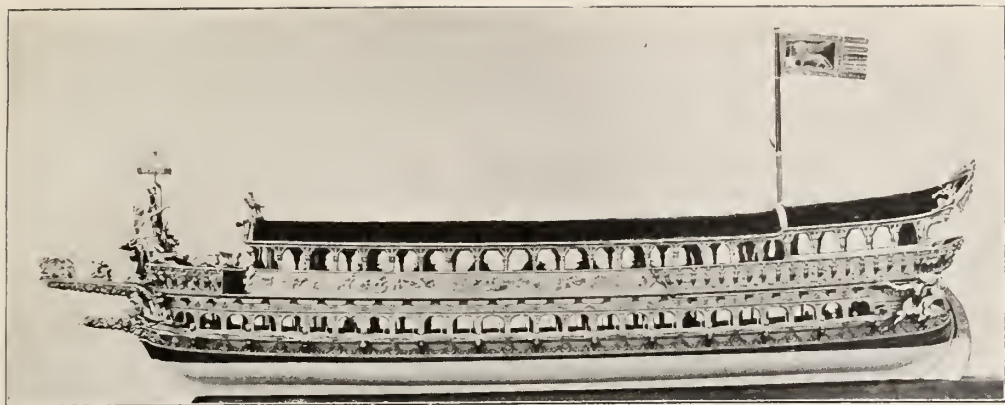


Fig. 3. The last Bucentoro (built in 1728) from the model at the arsenal.

## HISTORY.

**D**URING the first centuries of our era the small islands fringing the coast from Aquileja to the mouth of the Po were inhabited by a sparse population of fishermen and seamen. During the period of the migration of nations there was a considerable influx of citizens of good position from Aquileja, Altinum and Padua, fugitives from the fury of the Hunns, and later, in the fifth and sixth centuries, of the Goths and Longobardi. Whilst the terrors of war were raging on the Continent and the old Italian population was exterminated or absorbed by the foreign invaders, the old and new Italian elements regenerated quietly in the refuge of the marshy islands to form a new, vital race. As early as the middle of the sixth century the islanders were already generally known as bold seafarers and industrious and prosperous merchants and fishermen. We learn this from the best source, from Cassiodorus, the historian of the Ostrogoths. In time the islands, each of which had at first carried on its separate existence under the rule of its tribunes, became more closely connected and elected towards the end of the seventh century a mutual ruler with the title of a Duke, a *Doxe*, as the islanders called him in their soft dialect. At first this newly elected prince resided at Heraclea; later, after a transitory change in the constitution, at Malamocco, and finally, after 814, on one of the smallest, but best protected, of the islands, on Rivo Alto. From that date may be counted the years of the present Venice. A few neighbouring islands were soon connected by bridges with the new capital, and added to it as districts of the town; an imposing government palace was raised,



and when, in 827, a Venetian fleet had brought from Alexandria in Egypt the remains of S<sup>t</sup> Mark, Rialto-Venice had received her supreme consecration in the eyes of the pious contemporaries. The town now had a patron saint who had his home in it. Truly, his bones have possessed miraculous powers, though not quite in the sense of mediaeval christianity. The views of the people amalgamating the cause of S<sup>t</sup> Mark with the cause of the Republic, patriotism became an article of faith. The banner of the Republic was that of the saint; whoever insulted it, offended at the same time the apostle.



Fig. 4. Grand Canal with the Rialto Bridge.

The position of Venice was favourable, not only physically, but at least as much politically. Settled on the frontier, between Byzantium and Italy, between Slavs, Greeks and Romans, she Venetians were the chosen mediators between the Orient and the Occident. They have indeed played this part with the best possible advantages to their commerce and political power. Their dependance on Byzantium had never been taken very strictly; soon a Greek court title of the Doge was all that remained of it, a title which was last used by Ordelafo Falieri at the beginning of the twelfth century. The only sense, in which the Venetians insisted on a passable understanding with the Eastern

Empire, was, that they secured freedom of trade and intercourse within its vast boundaries. They knew how to obtain the same rights from the Italian Empire of the German emperors, and when the second millenium dawned, Venice was already considered a flourishing commercial state, richer than all her neighbours. The Doge Pietro Orseolo II., the friend of the young German Emperor Otho III., established factories and ports all along the Italian coast. The Roman coast-towns of Dalmatia, from Zara to Ragusa, rendered him homage. He was rightly conscious of being Lord of the Adriatic and expressed this feeling symbolically by an imposing and beautiful ceremony. Every year on Ascension day, he—and after him the later Doges—went to sea in a magnificently decorated boat (the Bucentoro) and celebrated his espousal of the Adriatic by throwing a golden ring into the waters. Not that the rule over Dalmatia had then by any means been assured, or even after the Byzantine emperor had formally ceded Istria and Dalmatia to the Doge in 1074. The Venetians were, on the contrary, constantly forced to struggle against the rivalry of the Hungarians, and only enjoyed the undisputed possession of the East coast of the Adriatic after the time of the crusades.

Nothing is more significant for the character of Venetian rule, than its attitude towards the crusades. Venice, at that time, treated the Western powers like a cunning financier who supports an unpractical enterprise only to enable him to exploit all the parties to it. She was guided throughout by cold calculation and showed no trace of that holy, though blind zeal which has cost the crusaders of France and Germany no end of money and blood. The newly created Kingdom of Jerusalem had scarcely been established, when the Venetians came with commercial treaties, in order to secure new markets. They took care to be well paid for any assistance rendered to the frequently harassed kings of Jerusalem or to the crusaders, and did so most successfully on the occasion of the so-called fourth crusade, the intellectual leadership of which they conducted with incomparable skill. Their then Doge, the nonagenarian Enrico Dandolo, was the type of the inexorable, hard creditor, but also of the practical, carefully judging statesman. After the foundation of the Latin Empire he added to his title that of a *dominator quartae partis et dimidia totius imperii Romaniae*. This high-sounding title expresses too little rather, than too much, for, apart from the East coast of the Adriatic, the most valuable coast districts and islands of Greece (f. i. Crete) became now Venetian property, partly through the treaty, and partly through special arrangements.

The support by Venice of the Lombard towns in their struggle against Frederick Barbarossa was not inspired either by ideal or patriotic motives. Only the interests of their financial politics induced the Venetians to counteract the preponderance of the emperor's power in the neighbouring Italy. And here

too their calmly calculating statecraft achieved a brilliant triumph, since Emperor and Pope concluded in 1177 their famous concordate under its auspices. The Venetians devoted increased attention to Italian affairs, after having brought their Oriental trade policy to a certain conclusion at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Their object was notably to secure the very important trade in food-stuffs on the West coast of the Adriatic, the chief centres of which were Ancona and Ferrara.

Repeated wars helped them to achieve this object completely. Step by step the Anconates and the Ferrarese were deprived of all independent commerce, and a severe control exercised over the navigation on the Po and the Adige. Particularly admirable is the skill with which, in 1240, the Venetians united to a kind of holy war the most incompatible elements: the Margrave of Este, Milan, Mantua, Brescia, Bologna, Piacenza and the Pope, avowedly to subject Ferrara to the church, although the only reasonable advantage eventually accrued to Venetian commercial policy. Add to this, that King Manfred also had to make the most important commercial concessions to the Venetians, on behalf of his Southern Italian Empire, and the result is, that at the end of the thirteenth century the Adriatic could well be considered a Venetian domain. Already at that time Venice had attained such importance, that she had become the centre of a universal commerce which embraced the major part of the then civilized world. In the East her regular intercourse extended to the Sea of Azof and to Persia, in the South to the African coast, and in the North to the regions of the Baltic. Her merchandise was of the most important and valuable. Venice was the most important grain market of Italy and produced herself (in Chioggia) the greatest quantity and best quality of salt. It is true, that in the course of this glorious development she had constantly to carry on struggles against numerous competitors whose interests were ever clashing with those of the Venetians in their most valuable commercial sphere, in the Orient. But here, too, after fierce fighting, a peaceful understanding was arrived at just at the end of the thirteenth century.

By no means the least cause of the great successes of Venice was the fact, that her domestic development had on the whole been accomplished in the service of the interests of her national economy, though by no means without struggles. A system by which the people elect their ruler always ends in the long run in hereditary government or in complete enfeeblement of the monarchy. In Venice things took the latter course. From the earliest times the Venetian dukedom had had a strong democratic flavour. At the end of the ninth century the important affairs of state were decided upon by a *publicum placitum* which comprised, under the direction of the Doge, the higher clergy, the nobles and the people. Gradually the representatives of



the people, and — about the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century — the ecclesiastics were excluded from these offices, so that the governing power remained vested with the Doge and the nobles. The authoritative influence had at that time already long been secured to the aristocracy; yet there had been a time, when it seemed doubtful, whether the Doges might not have forcibly secured supreme power and heredity of their rank. It gives one food for thought, that in the course of one century ten men of the Participazio family wore the horned cap of the Doges; that it became customary for the Doge to appoint his



Fig. 5. Façade of St Mark's.

eldest son as co-regent, whilst he could bestow upon his relatives the most important bishoprics and counties in the provinces. It was a Doge, Domenico Flabianico, who finally abolished these pretensions, in 1030, by promulgating a law, according to which the appointment of co-regents was in future forbidden and the election of the Doges restored to the entire community. A hundred years later the Doge, who had been chosen by a commission of electors, was only brought before the people for acclamation. And even this last concession was finally dropped in the fifteenth century. The aristocracy who had thus usurped the right of choosing the Doge, now proceeded upon gradually depriving the prince of all possibility of independent

action, even in the most unimportant matters.\* Already at the end of the twelfth century the Doge shared the power of government with two aristocratic bodies, a greater and a smaller council, from which the Great Council and the Senate were evolved later. The supreme administration of justice was in the hands of the tribunal of the Quarantia. The administration of the property of the church of St Mark was, in 1207, bestowed upon six Procurators, a tribunal which, subsequently considerably increased and invested with new functions, became the greatest power of the Republic next to the Doge. The bodies politic that shared the government and were generally renewed by delegates, became more and more numerous. The leading idea in the entire developement of the constitutional history was a wise distrust, the endeavour always to control one tribunal by another. What the administration lost in simplicity, it gained by the extensive political training of the entire ruling caste. The deliberate statecraft of the *nobili* was unexampled in the Europe of that period. Not heated by any kind of idealism they transferred their cool manner of calculating and managing from their counting-houses to the palace of the government. — Two notable reasons will be found, if one inquires into the steady growth of this aristocratic rule. First of all, part of the nobility had inherited — as descendants of the formerly ruling tribunes — a claim upon participation in the government. Others subsequently acquired a similar claim by advancing considerable sums to the State which was frequently in severe financial troubles. It was quite conceivable and in accordance with mercantile views, that these creditors of the State were allowed a share in the administration, in which they were interested by their capital.

The Venetian aristocracy knew how to arrange with great wisdom its relations to the other two classes which had been excluded from all participation in the administration of the State: the clergy and the citizens. If the Republic suffered no priest to occupy any public office, she honoured the Church and her servants on the other hand in every conceivable way in matters of public worship. The greatest sacrifices were readily made for the acquisition of relics; the frequency and splendour of the Venetian processions were incomparable, and even the purely political memorial festivals were given a more religious character than in other parts. And withal this, considered merely superficially, it was exceedingly characteristic, that the patriarchal church (*S. Pietro di Castello*) was modestly equipped and situated at the remotest end of the town, whilst the church of the Doges' Palace was made one of the most sumptuous temple buildings of the world. — The aristocracy displayed towards

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\* The most convenient cause for reducing his power was offered by the so-called promissions, the comprehensive oaths on the constitution, which from the time of Enrico Dandolo (1192) had to be sworn by every new Doge before he could take that title.



the citizen class a benevolent protection; nowhere could the interests of the industrials have been better guarded. Whilst on the one hand a highly developed guild system advanced among the citizens that spirit of caste which penetrated the whole organization of the Republic, there was on the other hand a certain sense of liberality. Jews and foreigners could acquire the right of citizenship, and Venice soon became an asylum for the political refugees of the neighbouring countries, just like England or Switzerland in modern times — only, they were not allowed to interfere with the affairs of Venetian government. The political ambitions of the citizens were disposed of, by conceding to them once for all a few posts, the most important of which was that of High Chancellor.

If the developement of the Venetian aristocracy had been sound on the whole to the end of the thirteenth century, a false step was now taken by an act which proved to be fatal in its consequences. It was the so-called "Shutting of the Great Council", which was passed into law in 1297 at the instigation of the Doge Gradenigo. Those *nobili*, who since the last four years had belonged to the Great Council, were inscribed in the golden book, whilst delegates elected other members of the aristocracy to complete their number. Only the members of the families that were thus represented were henceforth to be considered as a ruling class, as eligible for the Council. Although this rule was subsequently sometimes deviated from, it still expressed in principle the isolation of the nobles, who were moreover exposed to all the dangers of decrease through the dying out of families and of degeneration through inter-marriage. Centuries, it is true, had to pass before these dangers appeared threatening. At first the aristocracy seemed newly strengthened. Unavoidable revolutionary attempts on the part of discontented noble families and prominent citizens were energetically suppressed. The Council of Ten (since 1315), a supreme tribunal invested with ever extending powers, guarded civil peace with iron severity. On one occasion even, when the two suppressed members of the Venetian state, the Duke and the common people, combined in a revolt, they could achieve nothing whatever. Marino Falieri's head fell in 1355 between the columns of the Piazzetta and his partisans among the people were hung. A hundred years later, as proud a master-mind as the Doge Francesco Foscari suffered without a murmur all the tortures of the soul and the humiliations inflicted upon him by the victorious aristocratic party of the Loredani. More than that, he exhorted his only son to obedience, when he saw him wasting away, imprisoned and tortured. The Venetian nobility had become strong, not only as the ruling class, but also as the most important member in the economic life of the state. The wholesale trade and the shipping were still in their hands. And the *nobili* were at the same time the men to protect both, by wise council and also, sword in hand, at the head of their navies and armies.

Venice has often been blamed for her policy of Italian conquests, and it cannot be denied that the resentment of her injured and envious neighbours has finally become most disastrous for the Republic. Yet it must be admitted, that the Venetians could not well have taken another course, than that of founding an Italian territorial power. Their economic interests demanded it. At the beginning of the fourteenth century a number of sovereignties had sprung up in the neighbouring districts of Upper Italy, which, being all of illegitimate origin, could only be maintained by the most peremptory means of a brutally egoistic policy. The freedom of traffic and commerce, especially of the salt-trade, on which the prosperity of Venice depended, was constantly threatened, unless Venice met force with force. She had to possess territorial sway within her sphere of interest, in order to secure a voice in the general struggle for power, since peaceful political small-talk in the modern sense was here of no avail. There is this difference between the Venetians and their neighbours, that the former have never fought for dynastic interests or for vain greed of aggrandizement. They carried into all disputes that preponderating weight which results from wealth and stable government. In those times, when war was a trade, they could buy with their money the best troops and the best captains.

The first cause for interference in Italian affairs was offered them by the Lords della Scala who closed in their extensive Upper Italian state the navigation of the Po and burdened Venetian trade with duties. As usually happened later in such cases, the Venetians found allies in the neighbouring rulers; the Scala were beaten in 1338 and the district of Treviso fell to Venice. The most valuable allies of the Republic in this affair had been the Carrara, lords of Padua, and the Visconti, who had made Milan the centre of a considerable private power. The Venetians subsequently became involved in repeated struggles with them, for the same reasons as previously with the Scala.

The Visconti maintained their powerful position against the Republic; the Carrara, on the other hand, succumbed to the severe fate of the weak who has placed himself between two strong adversaries. Their domain became a prey of Milan and Venice, and the last ruler of their house, the aged Francesco Carrara, was executed with his son, in 1406, in the dungeons of the Doges' Palace. It is true, the Republic had strained her forces to the utmost, in the preceding vicissitudinous struggles. She had had to fight the Hungarians and Duke Albrecht III. of Austria, the allies of the Carrara. But the greatest danger was threatened for some time by her arch-enemies, the Genoese, who made use of the territorial feuds of the Republic, to try a decisive blow against her sea-power. When the Genoese admiral Pietro Doria had succeeded in establishing himself with an imposing fleet at Chioggia (1380), Venice seemed

lost for the moment. But the Signory decided in its extreme need to reinstate at the head of its navy the admiral Vittore Pisano, who had been put into prison for failures for which he had not been responsible. And when simultaneously a Venetian squadron returned from the Orient, the Genoese fighting power was forced to capitulate after a long investment. Since then Venice had no longer to fear the rivalry of the sister republic. She was recognized as the leading sea and colonial power of her time and proceeded now upon becoming also the leading territorial power of Italy. The annihilation of the Carrarese rule procured her possession of Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Bassano and Feltre. Soon after, the Republic acquired, in a successful war against the Hungarian armies of King Sigismund and the Patriarch of Aquileja, the whole of Friuli, and with it access to the trade-routes to Germany. About the same time Dalmatia, where the Hungarians had established themselves for sixty years, was definitely reconquered. The most valuable part of the littoral of the Adriatic belonged thus to the Republic.

The Doge Tommaso Mocenigo, who died in 1423, left his State in splendid prosperity. Venice then numbered 190000 inhabitants; her domain embraced over 42000 square miles; and the value of her trade was estimated at 10000000 ducats. A period of quiet prosperity seemed to be about to commence for the state of St Mark, but fate gave it now a ruler, whose character became fateful to it. Francesco Foscari was unquestionably one of the most important men who have worn the *corneo ducale*, and at the same time the last who has exercised a powerful influence on the general policy of the State, but he lacked that cool circumspection which had made Venice great. He needlessly forced the Republic into renewed interference with the affairs of the continent, against its most powerful state: Milan. An endless war followed, which swallowed enormous sums and stirred up the passions of the whole of Italy. It is true, Venice retained finally a new territorial addition, the districts of Bergamo and Brescia, which she had taken in the first years of the war. But it is very questionable, whether this gain outweighed the great losses, and the sum of hatred and envy that had accumulated against the Venetians. Twice Foscari had intended to renounce the dignity of his high office after transitory conclusions of peace, and both times he had been forced to remain. Now, after a reign of thirty-four years, he was deposed as a dead-broke man. He survived his fall only by a week.

His history has the moving character of a tragedy. With ardent ambition he had pursued the highest aims, and yet with his very name are connected the first symptoms of the decline of Venice. About the end of his reign the last remains of Byzantine rule fell into the hands of the Turks with the conquest of Constantinople (1453), through which Venice was brought into touch

with a dangerous neighbour. The rapacious Ottomans had long disturbed the Levantine trade, so that in 1342 already a long war had broken out, in which the Genoese had fought on the side of the infidels, until they were defeated in a bloody battle at Constantinople. All the same the Venetians had reaped many an advantage from the disintegration of the East Roman empire. But now, when that buffer-state had disappeared, the Venetian possessions formed the next object of Turkish greed of spoil. The fear of the Turks has ever since weighed up on the minds of the Venetians. In 1463 the war flames broke out in Morea with the occupation of Argos by the Turks. At first, when Mahomet II. had sworn the ruin of the whole of christianity, the Venetians found allies in Italy and particularly in the Church; but as soon as their claims to power on the continent were remembered, they were left alone. Their great wealth and the undisturbed peace in their capital enabled them to endure elastically the heaviest blows of a sixteen-years' war, in addition to repeated epidemics of the plague. All the same they had to be contented with escaping with the loss of Scutari and payment of a considerable indemnity in 1497. Two years later, war broke out again in Friuli and in Morea, and though the Venetians had the support of Spaniards and French, they finally lost Lepanto, Modon and Coron, as well as parts of Dalmatia.

Whilst Venice thus saw her sea-power in the East shaken, she had every reason for pursuing her interests in Italy with all the more determination. In fact, at this very time the great prospect seemed to be opened to her, of taking the leadership in the confusion of the Italian system of states, and to prepare, if not to found, the unity of Italy. But the Venetians have not been able to rise to the height of such a task. Ever under the constraint of their economic interests, they missed the opportunity of re-modelling their half international commercial and industrial state into an Italian national state. Fate would have it, that just at this critical period the Signory was left without its circumspect political wisdom. During the period of foreign invasion, which now commenced, the Republic only pursued the most obvious advantages. In consequence she stirred up against her all the powers concerned, and conjured up the catastrophe which has sealed the fate of Venice and of Italy.

At first, it is true, the Venetians seemed to succeed in everything. In alliance with Sixtus IV. they made Ferrara completely dependent as regards commercial policy, and gained a few important coast-towns of Apulia. They even established themselves within the domains of the Church. For the losses in the Greek archipel they seemed to be indemnified by gaining Cyprus, which Caterina Cornaro had to cede to the Republic, as her obedient daughter (1489). The Venetians committed their first fatal mistake, when they witnessed in



inactive neutrality Charles VIII. the French King's expedition against Naples. They had hoped to derive benefit from these quarrels. Later, of course, the fear of further encroachments on the part of the French induced them to join the so-called Holy League which allied Milan and Naples to Maximilian and the Pope. But when it was speedily discovered, how unreliable the Duke of Milan and Maximilian were as allies, it was thought advisable to take the side of the French, when they once more crossed the Alps under Louis XII, in 1498. The subjection of Milan, which was the object of the King, could only be of advantage to Venice who actually retained the districts of Lodi and Cremona after the fall of the Sforza rule. She subsequently adhered to the unfortunate alliance with France and consequently made an enemy of the emperor Maximilian whom she prevented by force from his intended invasion of Italy in 1508, and from whom she actually took some strips of frontier land by force of arms. Meanwhile the Signory had made a bitter enemy of the new Pope, Julius II, by obstinately detaining the occupied towns of the Papal State and thus fatally underrating his character. — The wise Signori in the *palazzo ducale* relied too firmly on the difference of the interests of their opponents, and seemed to overlook the fact, that their French allies were only awaiting an opportunity to attack them by surprise. And thus it happened that the Republic had to face unprepared the combination of the three powers in the League of Cambray, which was now joined by all the Italian grudgers and enemies of Venice. Her troops were beaten in April 1509 at Agnadello, and at one blow she found herself deprived of almost her entire *terra ferma*.

The Republic was deeply humiliated, and if in the end she regained her possessions, this was due less to her own strength, than to the superior judgement of the Pope and to the loyalty of her old subjects. But henceforth the glory of Venice was a thing of the past. She fell into the condition of the states which no longer have any high aims to pursue, and all her admirable political wisdom worked only for the maintenance of existing condition. Her outward splendour remained nevertheless undimmed for a long time yet. More than that, the Levantine trade took a new lease of life during some decades of peace with the Turks, and the consequences of the discovery of a sea-route to East India asserted themselves only very gradually. All the arts flourished in the asylum of the lagoons and decorated the town with that sparkling, magnificent dress in which we admire her to this day. Venice, who had always loved to celebrate fêtes, became the greatest centre of pleasure in Europe, and we do not hesitate to admit, that the pleasures, which were here sought and found, were by no means merely sensual. The aristocracy, now retired from business, cultivated literature and science. Now, in



the sixteenth century, full atonement was made for the former neglect of higher culture, and Venice became a centre for the rich culture of the renaissance — different, it is true, from Florence, Rome or Ferrara, but no less important. In this connection it is a characteristic trait, that Venice became the most renowned printing centre of Italy. It was just that the Venetians understood how to make a business of science, as of everything else.

With Italy they lived henceforward in peace. The unruly tyrannies of yore had partly disappeared, and partly become consolidated as legitimate principalities. The Pope and the Spanish vice-regents at Naples and Milan had the same interest in maintaining peace and order. Once only the relations between the Republic and the Church were seriously shaken, in 1606, when Pope Paul V. interdicted Venice for having imprisoned two criminal ecclesiastics. Only after the lapse of eighteen months an agreement was made, by which the interdict was annulled and the ecclesiastics set free “by way of exception”. For the rest Venice maintained all her rights and prerogatives against the Church, and notably enforced the banishment of the Jesuits from her territories, which had been decreed during this dispute. The year 1615 witnessed a war against Austria, caused by the latter country suffering the Uskok pirates to violate Venetian rights. But here also, after two years, the Venetians concluded a peace which was at least not disadvantageous. — Turkey alone constituted a great, threatening danger to the Republic during the last centuries of her existence. It was the Levantine trade of the citizens, which, together with the landed property of the aristocracy, had remained the sole source of Venetian prosperity. For a long time yet the Republic fought against the Turks, with glory, though not with good fortune, and many a *nobile* gave new splendour to his old name, as admiral or captain. Nevertheless the decline of the moral strength of Venice was not to be checked. By herself she was no longer a match for the infidels, since her defensive force did not consist in her brave sons, but in her good gold-pieces. Thus crumbled away, one by one, the most valuable parts of her colonial possessions. First Cyprus was lost in 1570 and was not retaken, although in the following year Don Juan of Austria annihilated the Turkish sea-power at Lepanto. After a long peace war broke out again in 1645 for the possession of Candia. The Republic strained her resources to the utmost; she humiliated herself to the extent of a wholesale barter of her titles and offices; moreover the Pope allowed her the title on all her territories. A whole succession of heroic captains-general have commanded her fleets in the course of the twenty-four years’ war. Amongst their number Battista Grimani, Lorenzo Marcello and Lazzaro Mocenigo fell facing the enemy, after brilliant successes. Yet Candia could not be held and

fell permanently under Turkish rule, when peace was concluded in 1669. — Once again Venice seemed about to rise to her past greatness, when, in 1684, she entered into a holy league with the emperor and the king of Poland for a war of aggression against the mutual hereditary enemy. For some time Francesco Morosini led the Venetian troops in Morea from victory to victory. The grateful people who, according to the custom of antiquity, had given him the by-name of Peloponnesiaco, impetuously demanded and achieved his election as Doge. A German captain of mercenaries, Count Königsmark, had fought victoriously by his side. After the latter had fallen and Morosini had



Fig. 6. Lion of St Mark's.

died, the fortunes of war wavered yet for some time. But in the end the possession of Morea at least was maintained. Thus Venice presented herself once more crowned with glory at the beginning of the eighteenth century. But it had only been a sham success. The inner disintegration of the strength of the Republic became clearly apparent, when, in 1713, the Turks on their side took up arms again in order to reconquer what they had lost. The whole of Morea became theirs, almost without a sword being drawn. Everywhere the Venetians retreated lamentably. Corfu was only held by a German general, Count von der Schulenburg. Even he could not have spared his masters the most humiliating losses, had not Venice found an invaluable

ally in the German emperor. Thus a tolerable peace was after all concluded at Passarowitz after Prince Eugene's great victories at Peterwardein and Belgrade.

On the whole the Republic of St Mark has only just vegetated ever since. For the political world she was surrounded by a reflection of the halo of her old, proverbial statecraft. For the world of pleasure the lovely town became a favourite rendez-vous. The *vie galante*, which can here be so thoroughly enjoyed, received its seasoning through all manner of local peculiarities: the expeditions in the gondola, the constant wearing of masks, to which was added a harmless, creepy fear of the mysterious powers of the state-inquisition. The outer frame of this life with its faded splendour commenced also to be considered from the romantic, sentimental side. In a political calm the decayed edifice of the Venetian state with its partly senile, partly frivolous conditions might have existed for a long time yet, since the government was wise and just in its own way; but everything collapsed at the first storm. It is now just a hundred and six years, since the Napoleonic general Baraguay d'Hilliers occupied Venice (1797), since the golden book of the aristocracy was burned, and drunken wenches danced the carmagnole on the Piazza around the trees of liberty.

Since those days the fate of Venice has undergone many more changes. But here we need not speak of them, for all these changes have found no echo in the art of Venice. Nor could they have done so, because Venetian art had died with the Republic.

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Fig. 7. The Mouth of the Grand Canal. (Dogana di Mare and S. Maria della Salute.)

## ARCHITECTURE.

GOETHE loved to take his first view of a strange and curious town from a high tower — a bird's eye view, as it were. Only when he had thus gained a general impression in loose outline, he proceeded upon studying the single monuments from close proximity. We will try to follow the example of the old master in our short examination of Venice.

Two things are decisive for the general aspect of a town: first of all its geographical position, and then the character of its inhabitants. In Venice both are closely connected in more curious a fashion, than anywhere else in the world. The site of the town is formed by a group of little islands in the shallow and marshy lagoons of the Adriatic; the largest island was called Rialto, and around it were grouped Dorsoduro, Luprio, Gemine, Mendicola, Ombriola, Olivolo and Spinalunga — the present Giudecca. Freshwater springs broke here and there from the soil which contains a rich proportion of shell-lime. Meadows and trees flourished, and the movements of ebb and tide prevented the marshy ground of the surrounding sea from becoming injurious to health.



Thus the Italian fugitives who migrated to these islands in the early middle-ages, found all the conditions for a healthy and protected settlement. But the space was limited from the beginning, although, for centuries after, soil could still be spared for meadows and gardens. The most popular of these gardens was the present Piazza, through the midst of which flowed the Rivo Batario which was only filled up in 1172 by the Doge Sebastian Ziani. A mighty, old elder-tree rustled in the wind, where now the clock-tower stands, and in front of San Salvatore stood a fig-tree, to which the horsemen used to tie their horses,<sup>1</sup> when they were no longer allowed to trot through the narrow street of the Merceria.



Fig. 8. The Mouth of the Grand Canal. To the right the Palazzo Corner della Cà grande.

But soon the firm soil of the island became insufficient for the rapidly growing population. They continued building into the water on dense piling of elm and larch-wood, rammed into the marshy ground. Where the building-site was so precious, the houses were naturally crowded close together and tended more in an upward, than in a longitudinal direction. But as the water was bound to remain everywhere the chief means of communication for every kind of transport, the result was the gradual completion of that close net of canals, by which Venice is intersected in every direction. The streets, which crossed the canals on arched bridges, served exclusively for foot-traffic, and were made so narrow, that it is possible in most of them to touch the opposite walls of the houses by spreading one's arms. A brilliant satirist has called Venice "A ship of stone, that has been anchored for thirteen centuries", and the fitness of this description cannot fail to strike everybody who first finds



himself in the chaos of passages and bridges. It stands to reason that these conditions lacked the most necessary foundations for a development of architecture, as it is understood by us. How can one achieve monumental effects, or a harmonious arrangement in grand style, if space is lacking everywhere?

The character of the Venetian population became decisive for the development of the architecture and of the other fine arts under such peculiar conditions. The ship of stone was inhabited by merchants and seafarers. Their economic interests had led to an aristocratic constitution of the common-



Fig. 9. The Grand Canal.

wealth, which was less favourable to prominent individual activity, than any other form of government. All conditions helped, on the other hand, to produce the greatest possible conformity not only in the interests, but also in the social bearing, of the citizens. Hence Venice never lent herself to those mighty castles of great lords, which retain the character of a fortress even amidst peaceful, civic-life. Secular monumental edifices took here the exclusive form of government buildings or of meeting-places of confraternities. The general passion for glory of the renaissance, which also took a hold on the Venetians, was here kept under restraint. Only the memory of saints or of the heads of the state could be honoured by splendid monuments in the churches. And in both cases the homage was rendered less to the personality

of the man, than to the cause which he had served—religion or the state. On the other hand in private life nothing interfered with the enjoyment of wealth. Here were exhausted the means which were not allowed to serve high-flowing ambition. If the rich mercantile class is always and everywhere inclined materially to enjoy the acquired material wealth, the Venetians showed themselves particular experts in this direction. The Orient, with which they were in constant, intimate relations, taught them many a habit of comfort and luxury, which they ennobled afterwards with the innate refinement of their Latin race. In the middle-ages Venice was already considered the town



Fig. 10. The Piazza seen from the church of St Mark.

with the most luxurious life in Italy. From such inclinations one cannot so much expect the cultivation of an exalted and serious direction of art, as the encouragement rather of those arts which lend gayness to life: decoration, painting, music, pageantry and the stage.

Thus the general aspect of Venice, as we still see it to-day—how ever much it may differ from the aspect of all other towns—is in itself entirely homogenous. The type of the comfortable dwelling-house, the palazzo, is continued essentially unchanged down to the last centuries of the Republic. The principal room is a large hall in the upper story, called *liagò* in the middle-ages, opened in wide arches towards the South, if possible, and with small dwelling rooms to the left and right. Later, beginning with the twelfth century, the front part of the *liagò* is formed as an open gallery, called

*pergola*, from which the hall proper is separated by a wall with windows. On the ground-floor, which serves for commercial intercourse, appears again a central hall; the rooms at the sides are generally divided by an inserted floor into a ground-floor proper and a mezzanine. On the second floor, to which in exceptional cases a third is added, the arrangement of the first floor is repeated. The front of the building is turned towards the canal, the back towards the court which borders on the street. An outside flight of steps connects the courtyard with the dwelling-rooms of the first floor. Truly remarkable is the alinement by which the Venetian house was distinguished in the



Fig. 11. The Piazza seen from the Ala nuova, before the fall of the Campanile.

middle-ages. In no part was there any waste of space. The chimneys were excellently constructed, the wells frequently provided with cranes which lifted the water straight into the upper storeys. The flow of the tides in the canals constituted a purifying drainage, that cannot be surpassed by the artificial system of any modern capital.

The narrow maze of canals and streets was traversed by one single, broad thoroughfare, the *Canale Grande*, which winds throught the town in the shape of a reversed S. Here was air and light in plenty. The proudest *palazzi* lined its banks from the earliest times. To this day it has remained, what it appeared as far back as 1495 to the French ambassador Philippe de Comines "the most beautiful street of the world". But its beauty lies not alone in the fantastic splendour of the marble houses which are reflected in its waters, but



just as much in the incomparable curves of the canal. The straight direction of a street may well be justified from the practical point of view that the straight road is the shortest, but from no esthetic reason. The straight road is always ugly, because it is tedious; for in the same measure, in which it forces the wanderer to stare towards the open end of the street, it prevents him from contemplating the buildings at both sides. The *Canale Grande*, on the other hand, presents everywhere a picture, the frame of which is sometimes narrower, sometimes wider, but always closed. Its palaces impress themselves



Fig. 12. The Piazzetta.

so easily upon the traveller's memory, notably because from every point of his progress he finds himself faced by one of them.

If Venice can boast of possessing the most beautiful street, she also encircles the most beautiful square. The *Piazza* likewise preaches a chapter from the esthetics of architectural art (fig. 10, 11). It clearly demonstrates to us, that a Square should be not only a place of concourse, but also a place of communion. We have to-day come to the point of considering a Square as the natural crossing-place of important thoroughfares, and therefore not as a closed space, but a space open to all sides, a space furthermore, in which one must not rest, but which must be traversed as quickly and carefully as



possible. The *Piazza* is the opposite of all this. It surrounds us like a hall with its marble walls. It has a calming effect; and whoever does not know it, cannot guess that two of the most crowded streets, the Merceria and the Calle San Moisè, open into its porticos. No common buildings, not even any common material, disturb the festive splendour. That the old and the new Procuratie, considered by themselves, are monotonous, and that the connecting modern building on the West-side of the Square seems a little ponderous, is soon forgotten; nay, it is almost an advantage, because one's eye is thus forcibly directed upon the church of S<sup>t</sup> Mark. The glimpse into the Piazzetta de' Leoni, and the small irregularities in the disposition—the Square widening towards the East, and S<sup>t</sup> Mark's not being exactly in the production of the median axis—only help to heighten the pictorial charm. The *Piazzetta* (fig. 12) presents a splendid ante-room to this sumptuous hall. It opens towards the lagoon, and yet, even here, the distant picture of the island of San Giorgio forms a fitting frame. In the centre of the group of Squares, marking the limits of the Piazza and the Piazzetta, stood like a mighty pillar the ill-fated *Campanile of S<sup>t</sup> Mark* (fig. 11). The whole disposition has no match in the whole world and surpasses in dignified and serene splendour all the inventions of the boldest flight of the painters' fancy.



Fig. 13. Carlo Goldoni.

There are no monuments in the Squares; only at the end in front of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's are raised three flag-staffs on the most beautiful of all pedestals, and at the entrance to the Piazzetta two enormous monolith columns which bear the symbols of the patron saints of the Republic. In fact, the only statue that has been erected in olden times on a public Square in Venice, is the Colleoni in front of S. Giovanni e Paolo. Here too is food for reflection for us, who generally cannot rest, until we have built a monument in the



Fig. 14. Cathedral of Torcello. In the foreground the Bishop's Throne.

centre of every spacious Square. It must, of course, be placed in the centre of the Square, so that we may admire not only the face, but also the back, of the famous man. There was once a time—in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—when for such cases the monument was so composed as to offer an important aspect from every side. The spectator was thus forced, to circle round the monument in order to enjoy it. Our sculptors have felt the esthetic error, on which this theory was based, and content themselves again with one chief aspect. However, they seem to be less aware of the fact that, in order to be consistent, they would have to place the monument in such a



way as to force the beholder to look at it from the principal side. Thus in Venice, too, the houses keep a respectful distance from the famous men in marble or bronze. Victor Emanuel, the little would-be-great, rides about with boastful gesture in the midst of the Riva. Daniele Manin, Garibaldi, Goldoni and Niccolò Tommaseo all stand and sit in the middle of Squares. Popular wit has bestowed the name *Cacalibri* on the Tommaseo by the famous Milanese Barzaghi. This is Barzaghi's reward. Dal Zotto's Goldoni, which is altogether the best of the Venetian standing figures, is good in so far at least, as it makes the poet look down upon the surging of the crowd which he himself has described so charmingly (fig. 13). But how is the Colleoni placed? —



Fig. 15. Cathedral of San Donato in Murano. Exterior of the Choir.

The beautiful socle appears too high to many; but it forces the beholder to step back a certain distance; it almost forces him to the spot, from which the monument wants to be seen. From here the figure also gets its proper background in the dark brick-wall of the church.

And yet another lesson is taught by the aspect of the town of Venice: not only the monuments, but also the buildings, have their principal aspect, which ought to be quite sufficient. An unfortunate impulse of mistaken reverence has led our contemporaries to the idea, that it is necessary to rid important buildings of their appendages, to "peel them out", as the fine phrase runs. This peeling process is, no doubt, sometimes beneficial to archæological research, but never to artistic effect. Of the finest buildings in Venice, only

S<sup>ta</sup> Maria dei Miracoli stands quite free, and even it in a very limited sense, one of the sides and also the back being turned towards narrow streets. S<sup>t</sup> Mark is only exposed on two sides. Even more hidden are S. Giovanni e Paolo, the Frari and S. Stefano. A number of the most interesting buildings show to the outer world only their front (f. i. S. Maria dell' Orto,



Fig. 16. Central Pediment on the Façade of St Mark's.

S. Zaccaria, S. Salvatore, Scalzi). And yet, as far as I am aware, nobody has yet demanded that they should be peeled out, in order to be better appreciated.

The oldest of the "stones of Venice" belong to the Church. But to see them, one must leave the town and go by boat on the lagoon, to Murano and to the quiet Torcello. Here we find, uninjured as yet, some thousand years old, the type of the ancient Christian basilica, with nave and aisles without transept, with semi-circular apse and with the atrium before the main entrance. The *Cathedral of Torcello* certainly still belongs in its essential parts to the ninth



century (fig. 14). The Corinthian columns of the interior are perhaps remains of late antique art. From the golden background of the wall-surface the surly effigies of Byzantine saints look into the dreary interior: the Crucified Christ above the inside of the porch, a Mary in the semi-dome of the apse. Very curious is the simple, lofty episcopal throne rising from amidst the semi-circular stone-bench of the presbyter. A row of columns, which supports a low screen and is shut off below by marble slabs in clumsy relief, separates the chancel from the nave. — The neighbouring church of *Santa Fosca* represents another type of early mediaeval church architecture. The principal part of the building has a dome-shaped roof, but is at present protected by



Fig. 17. St Mark's. Capitals from the Vestibule.

a low, provisional roof. Built on to it are three very short transepts of equal length. The choir and the picturesque portico with its surmounted circular arches are evidently later additions, dating back to about the end of the eleventh century. — As regards the *Cathedral* of the glassblowers' island *Murano*, we take less interest in the repeatedly rebuilt interior (originally a basilica), than in the picturesque exterior of the choir (fig. 15). The double row of arches which, resting on double columns, extend round the polygonal choir and the aisles, and the inlay of white, red and green marble and yellow-red brick patterns constitute one of the finest architectural pictures of Venetian art. The disintegrating influence of the near lagoon has here been advantageous to the general pictorial effect. According to an inscription in the mosaic floor of the church, the building was completed in the year 1111. Most characteristic

in this case is the combination of the occidental plan of the building and the oriental motifs of the decoration, the very stilted circular arches and the coloured geometrical patterns of the walling. Again and again we shall come across similar arrangements in the whole course of mediaeval architecture in Venice.

The picture of these curious and picturesque churches is however only a faint prelude to the powerful impression of S<sup>t</sup> Mark (fig. 5, 16—20). Let us

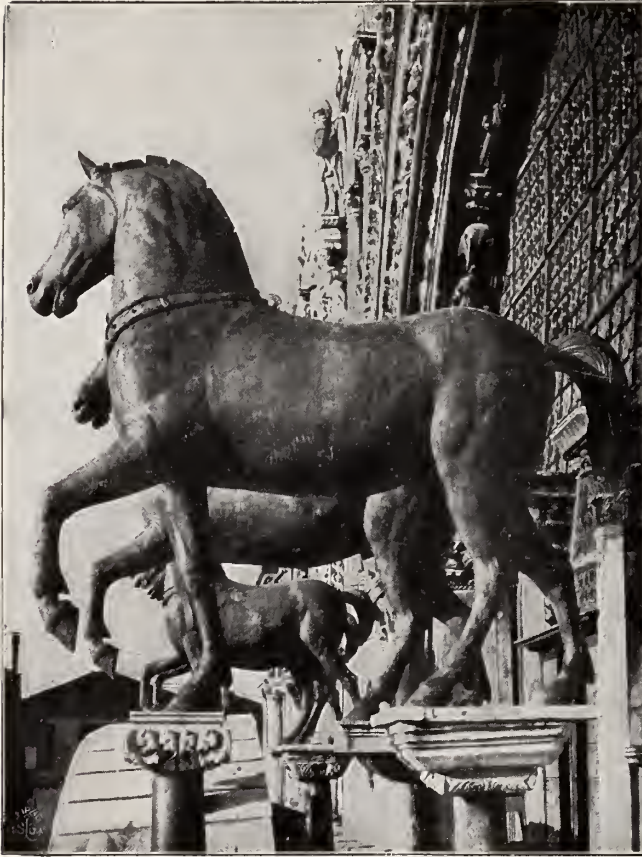


Fig. 18. Antique Horses from the Façade of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's.

remain facing the front. The wonderful building seems to belong to none of the known styles. The incredibly fantastic splendour of the façade immediately holds one spell-bound, and only when his eye has had its fill of the unusual apparition, does the beholder feel the critical endeavour to account for the reason of his delight. And then he makes the remarkable discovery, that here, where his feeling praises everything loudly and emphatically, his examining reason has to find some fault everywhere. First of all he must admit that the effect of this façade is far more pictorial, than architectural. If the forms of the building are considered as such, one will find again

and again irregularities and confusion. Why is the wall divided into two storeys? Why this extravagant crowding of columns? Why is it, that the arches above the main entrance have to cut twice across a cornice? On approaching the front, so that the cupolas disappear from view, one might think that the five arches lead into a five-aisled basilica, like, say the Cathedral of Casale. But this is entirely misleading. And if you now consider the details, you will notice not only an apposition of the kind that will often be found, but a pell-mell, an inextricable jumble of the forms of style of all



christian art-epochs down to the late renaissance, interspersed with oriental motifs. The capitals of the columns contain every possible mediaeval variation of the antique forms, by the side of Byzantine basket and lattice patterns; the majority of the columns themselves originate probably from remains of antique, oriental buildings. Among the arches appears sometimes the modest



Fig. 19. Western Vestibule of St Mark's.

semicircle (the niches of the vestibule), sometimes the stilted arch (the three middle porches), and sometimes the ogee-arch, now simple (on the two outside porches), and now decorated with splendid creepers (on the five pediments). The mosaics of the portal-niche on the extreme left probably date back to about the end of the twelfth century; the adjoining mosaics of the next niche, like all the rest on the façade, to the late renaissance. The oldest of the sculptures are the famous four antique horses above the centre of the portico,

which came to Venice with the loot of the fourth crusade (fig. 18). The reliefs on the first and third arches of the main porch must date back to about the turn of the twelfth century, and the rich and delicate bordering of the niches above them, with tendrils and dainty figures leaning towards each other, to about a hundred years later. Finally in the fifteenth century the architect of the Doges' palace, Bartolommeo Buon, crowned the pediments with that wonderful cornice of statues and diversified foliage, from which saints and angels are rising, and placed by its side the tabernacles with the figures of the Evangelists, the angel and the Virgin of the Annunciation (fig. 16). — The value of the infinitely diversified details varies, of course, considerably; some parts, like the mosaic in the portal-niche on the left and the Gothic sculptures of the pediment, belong to the best of their kind, and the even splendour of the material is so dazzling as to hide the inferiority of many other details. If one looks over the whole building, one would not wish to see any part altered, for every bit relates a piece of history.

The effect of the interior forms the most striking contrast to that of the exterior. After having crossed a narrow ante-temple covered with dome-shaped vaults, you enter a hall which is as surprising for its size, as it is for the evenly toned quietness of its decoration.

The mighty effect of vastness is based first of all on the simplicity of the plan: five cupolas arranged in the shape of a Greek cross and the spaces under each cupola surrounded by narrow side-aisles. In the Western, Northern and Southern transept the side-aisles are separated from domed part by rows of pillars, above which extends a gallery. — A further reason for the grandeur of the effect is to be found in the smallness of the profiles, which almost amounts to poverty. Imagine the dome rebuilt in baroque style, with the far projecting profiles of the late renaissance in the place of these meagre impostes and arched mouldings, and the whole room will immediately shrink together. This is not the place to discuss the esthetic law, on which this effect is founded. As a test I should, however, recommend the church of S<sup>t</sup> Peter's in Rome, the interior of which, as is generally known, does not by any means immediately produce the effect of its true, gigantic size. The chief reason is undoubtedly to be found in the colossal forms of the separate architectural parts.

To the beauty of the spatial effect is added at S<sup>t</sup> Mark's the multi-coloured splendour of the decoration. And these mosaics with their golden backgrounds, which cover all the domes and arches and the higher parts of the walls, do not in the least reduce the impression of grandeur of the whole, because they lose themselves in the general effect of colour. The key-note is given by the warm and dull brown of the marble, which goes splendidly with the gold decoration. Other kinds of marble, red, green, veined with black and white,



are used in some parts. Innumerable mosaic patterns cover the floor. (Most of these date back to the thirteenth century.)

One may well understand, that the church of St Mark has become a favourite rendez-vous for architectural painters, for, indeed, there is scarcely a point in its interior, which does not offer a picturesque aspect in whatever direction.

Strangely enough, even the homogenous ground-plan of the church contains now diverse elements. The three semi-circular apses, which terminate the East transept, and also the nature of the walling of the West transept, make it



Fig. 20. The Interior of St Mark's.

appear most likely, that we have here the remains of an original edifice in the shape of a basilica. It is known that the church of St Mark has been partly destroyed in the tenth century by a great fire. It was afterwards, in the eleventh century and notably under the Doge Domenico Selvo, rebuilt, and was probably only then given its present form of a domed church after the Byzantine example. The semi-circular crypt under the choir, which stood for centuries under water, also dates back to this period. Later still, in the twelfth century, the vestibule, which was probably not finished before the fourteenth century, was added (fig. 19).

As regards the interior decoration, we must first speak of the little Romanesque altar-house which is situated by the second pillar of the left aisle (from the main entrance). It was originally erected on the Piazza and was only

transferred into the church at the end of the thirteenth century, after a miscreant had perpetrated an outrage upon it. Probably of about the same date as this dainty shrine, are the four columns of the tabernacle over the high altar, which are decorated with series of reliefs from the history of the Old and New Testaments, arranged in ring-shape. The front of the high altar below this tabernacle is covered by the famous *pala d'oro*, the finest production



Fig. 21. Detail of the Pala d'oro.

of Byzantine enamel art. Its oldest, higher part dates back to the tenth century. The choir-screen, on which are placed the figures of St Mark, the Virgin and the Apostles, was erected about the end of the fourteenth century. The renaissance period added the splendid decoration of the Cappella Zen, whilst the mosaics were worked on far into the eighteenth century. The oldest of them, the mosaics of the chief domes (with the exception of the Southern one), those of the vestibule and of the Capella Zen show the Byzantine style with the



slight changes it has undergone from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. Nevertheless, the stiff, surly figures have the great merit of fitting excellently into the architecture, by which they are surrounded. And the same cannot be said of all the mosaics of the later period, although in some cases the most famous painters of Venice have supplied the designs for them (f.i. Titian for the Preaching and Death of S<sup>t</sup> James in the left aisle).

To the last years of her existence the Republic has never ceased decorating the magnificent shrine of her patron saint. Every period has offered the best and most precious of all it had to offer, fortunately sparing in most cases what had existed before. Even the brazen, self-satisfied baroque art did venture upon



Fig. 22. Museo Correr, formerly Fondaco de' Turchi.

interfering with the venerable temple, beyond completing its mosaic decoration.

At first the church of S<sup>t</sup> Mark has remained without any influence on the developement of Venetian church architecture. Only in the renaissance period its wonderful arrangement of space was again referred to. Altogether, the few remains of Romanesque church architecture, that have been preserved in Venice, are so completely hidden under the additions of later centuries, that they may well be passed over here. To-day far more is to be seen of the private buildings of that period, although, it must be admitted, mostly in fragments. The most beautiful of the Romanesque palaces, now arranged as the *Museo Correr*, shows scarcely a stone of its old walling. The brilliant Venice.

marble front has been entirely rebuilt a few decades ago, although the old forms have been followed. The major part of the two storeys is devoted to colonnades which terminate in stilted round-heads. Eighteen arches on the first floor are supported by ten on the ground-floor. To the left and right of the hall three and four high windows are let into the wall of the ground-floor and first floor respectively. A line of triangular, pierced battlements crowned the building. Not before the seventeenth century was the palace used as ware-



Fig. 23. Palazzo Loredan. (The two higher storeys are later additions.)

house (fondaco) of the Turks (fig. 22). The same type of two-storied, colonnaded façades is shown among the palaces of the Grand Canal by the present Municipio (*Palazzi Loredan and Farsetti*) and by the *Palazzo Businello*, all of which are more or less spoilt by later additions. On other palaces of this period (f. i. *Palazzo Falier* in the Campo Sti. Apostoli) we notice above the stilted round-head some pointed-arched tracery, entirely in the shape of the late Gothic ogee-arch. But this motif must by no means be taken as a proof of an early appearance of the Gothic style. It is, on the contrary, a purely decorative form of oriental origin, which, it is true, was taken up by Gothic



art and garnished in its sense. Those palaces may have been built about 1200, and certainly not much later.

The Gothic style made its entry in Venice by a different route, in the train of the mendicant orders. Only with difficulty can we to day form an idea of the enormous, many-sided influence that was exercised upon their time by the two saintly monks, Franciscus and Dominicus. Thus much is firmly established: that the greatest event in Italian culture of the thirteenth century is marked with their names. Franciscus had only lain in his grave for two years, when,



Fig. 24. S. Maria gloriosa dei Frari. Interior.

simultaneously with his sanctification, the erection was commenced of the church at Assisi, which is consecrated to his memory. The plans had been designed in the Gothic style, and the history of Italian Gothic church architecture became henceforth the history of the Franciscan and Dominican churches which soon sprang up in all places. The populace of the towns received the simple monks with enthusiastic love. The rich and the poor contributed their mite towards their monasteries and churches, and funds became so abundant, that the severe rules issued by the saints of the order with regard to their buildings, were soon generally set aside. Thus, the two churches of the mendicant orders in Venice, *S. Maria dei Frari* and *S. Giovanni e Paolo* offend seriously against the

rules of the order, with their mighty dimensions and their vaults, and the Frari church also with its campanile. But as far as the essential features of the plan are concerned, they harmonize not only with each other, but also with the other churches of their orders: the Latin cross of the ground-plan and the ample dimensions of the choir which is accompanied by a series of side chapels. Peculiarities of the group of Venetian churches are the column-shaped round pillars which separate the aisles from the nave, the equal number



Fig. 25. The Choir of S. Maria dei Frari.

of the vaults in these aisles and naves, and the polygonal termination of the apse of the choir and of its side chapels. Much as we appreciate the beautiful effect of space in the interior, especially in the Frari, we yet feel sobered by the exterior of these churches. The Italian has never known how to utilize the constructive forms of the Gothic style for the decoration of the building. The choir of the Frari, with its high windows decorated with tracery, comes nearest to achieving a vivid effect; the bare façade is imposing in its proportions only. Motiveless, curved tops disfigure the gable, and a richly sculptured porch with pinnacles stands, quite unexpectedly as it were,



in the midst of the sober face of the wall. A similar porch, more sumptuous still and with splendid creepers on the pediment, is that of *San Stefano*. (Here the terracotta casements should also be noticed. The cloister with its too dainty columns belongs to the early renaissance). The front of *S. Giovanni e Paolo* is unfinished patchwork, from which the magnificent porch suddenly projects, — a characteristic piece of Venetian work from the period of the conflict between the Gothic and the renaissance (the second half of the fifteenth century). The façade of *Sta. Maria dell' Orto* remains now the most beautiful



Fig. 26. S. Giovanni e Paolo.

of the Venetian Gothic churches, since only a few promising fragments are left of the church of the *Servites*. The large windows of the aisles, the dainty design of the cornice, with the lesser dimensions of the whole building, give the front that very harmonious compactness which the fronts of those larger churches are completely lacking. To this must be added the rich, figural decoration on the porch, above the aisles, and in the tabernacles, probably a work of the Buon school which will be referred to later (fig. 27).

Not in the churches was the Gothic style destined to achieve its best, but in palace architecture. More than that, it has here given the physignomy

of the town its truly characteristic features. The Venetian palace, as it is known and admired by the whole world, is the Gothic palace. It is true, this Gothic is only a very distant relation of our Northern cathedrals and town-halls, a relation which, by the way, is closely connected with the Orient. This latter connection is so clearly evident, that it has tempted some art erudites of Italy to the ridiculous error of proclaiming the Oriental origin of all that



Fig. 27. S. Maria dell' Orto.

is called Gothic style. In its intentions and in its forms the Gothic style is entirely constructive. Now, the palaces of Venice, with their firmly established, traditional type, did not offer it any new constructive problems. Anything that pleased was borrowed, instead, from the new forms, without their meaning being questioned, and these motifs were used playfully for purely decorative purposes. As hitherto, the horizontal articulation was decidedly accentuated. Nobody thought of renouncing the semicircular arch, or incrustation. The



pointed arch was used, where the construction permitted, for preference in the weak and daintily curved shape which was known from the Orient. The Gothic crab developed into the loosely undulating creeper; the cross-flower became a rich finial or a lily-shape. It is only natural that the declining Gothic with its decorative secondary designs lent itself better to such intentions, than the severe Gothic of the best period. And thus we find the bloom of truly Venetian palace architecture in the fifteenth century, when the elements of the renaissance were already permeating and disintegrating the Gothic forms.



Fig. 28. The Doges' Palace.

The whole development of this architecture is accompanied by a monumental building which in its outside appearance and in its historical importance is as unique as the church of St Mark: the Doges' Palace — another building, the fantastic, picturesque total effect of which makes it exceedingly difficult critically to examine the details of form. Who would dare to speak of faults, where the architectural picture, such as it is, lives in the imagination of the whole civilized world? — And yet all customary notions about the articulation of a façade are here turned upside down in the literal sense of the word. We take it for granted, for static as well as for esthetic reasons, that the groundfloor should be shaped more massively, whilst the upper storeys should

be lighter. Here it is the other way about. Two arcades support a mass of wall almost as high as the two arcades together, and interrupted only by a

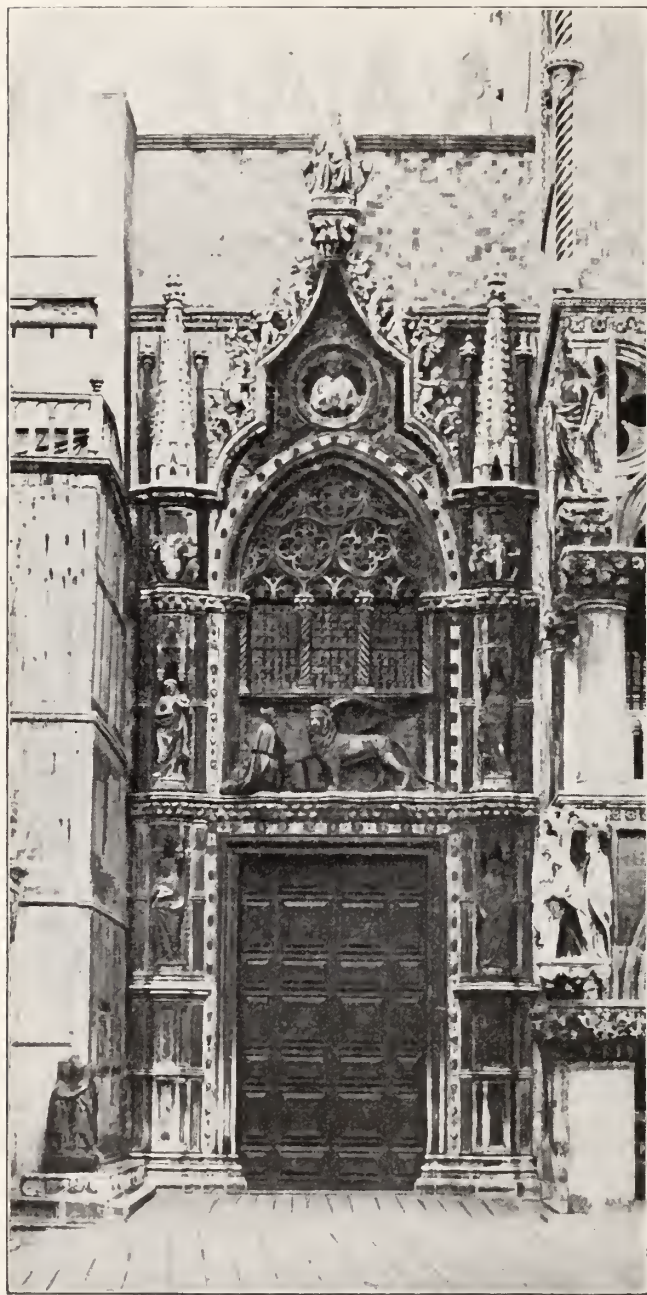


Fig. 29. Porta della Carta, Doges' Palace.

few windows. Furthermore the proportion of the two arcades to each other is so improbable, that for a long time it was believed, that a good portion of the heavy, baseless columns of the groundfloor must be buried in the ground. But this is not the case. The columns never were higher than we see them now. It is nevertheless significant, that soon after the completion of the building the disproportion was felt and boldly corrected in the pictures of the painters who were then more ingenious than at the present day. In most of the old pictures and wood-cuts of the Doges' Palace we find the ground-floor heightened and the upper wall shortened.

The history of the Doges' Palace is closely interlinked with that of the Republic. Immediately after the seat of the government had been transferred to Rialto, the erection of a Ducal castle was commenced. Of this building, it is true, no traces are left to-day. What we see, dates back in its oldest parts

to the fourteenth century. At first, before 1340, the two arcades were built, commencing on the South-East corner by the present *ponte della paglia*. The



remnants of the older palace were allowed to remain behind it. The conspiracy of the Doge Marino Falieri led to an interruption of the works. One of the master-builders, Filippo Calendario, was among the guilty and was hung on the columns of his own building. It is said that at that time a decree of the Senate imposed a fine of a thousand ducats for speaking of the continuation of the building. At last, the story goes, the Doge Tommaso Mocenigo took it upon himself to pay the fine, thus making it possible to recommence the work in 1422. This theory is unfortunately contradicted by the date of 1404



Fig. 30. Court of the Doges' Palace.

which appears on one of the large, splendid windows on the South side, a work of *P. Paolo delle Massegne*. How ever this may be, the artists' family of the Buon brought the building to a satisfactory completion during the first decades of the fifteenth century. The *porta della carta*, commenced since 1439 by *Bartolommeo* and by his father *Giovanni Buon*, was the final touch (fig. 29). It is a dainty and rich — perhaps too rich — gem of late Venetian Gothic sculpture, already much permeated by renaissance motifs.

Having passed through this gate and through a dusky colonnade into the *Court of the Palace*, the visitor will find a new surprise in store for him. Here the renaissance already rules supreme. It has erected the most sumptuous



marble structures along two sides of the wide court. The building of that hall behind the *porta della carta*, and notably the tower at its end, the so-called *torricella* with its curved roof and the many pinnacle-like obelisks at both sides, has still many a Gothic motif. And also the beautiful gallery with its pointed arches on the upper storey of the palace repeats some mediaeval motifs, but yet a new and more brilliant style triumphs everywhere. Three masters have here joined hands: Bartolommeo Buon built the *torricella* after a fire in 1477; *Antonio Rizzo*, the worthy sculptor, commenced soon after 1480 the two lower storeys of the East wing and carried in 1498 the *scala dei giganti* up to the apartments of the Doge, so that the prince might from here descend in solemn procession in the eyes of the people; and finally *Pietro Lombardo* (since 1499) added two richly decorated storeys with windowed fronts to the two halls and erected the façade in front of the Capella San Clemente behind the giants' staircase. There was sufficient difference in the style of the three masters: the fresh Rizzo counterbalanced the more ponderous Buon, and the two were joined by the dainty Lombardo, the master of Venetian jewel-box architecture. And yet all the three were united by that ingenuousness, that joy in things beautiful, which youth and the early renaissance have in common. Some parts were completed about 1550 by *Antonio Scarpagnino*, f. i. the decoration of the three arcades behind the upper landing of the staircase. He has also changed the arrangement of the windows on the façade turned towards the canal. The Doges' Palace has thus retained the external appearance which it was given about the middle of the sixteenth century. A danger, with which it was threatened after repeated fires (1574, 1577), was happily averted. Palladio, to wit, recommended a thorough alteration of the damaged building in the sense of his severe late renaissance style. But fortunately the Signory decided in favour of the opinion of Antonio da Ponte who subsequently restored everything with great discretion and admirable skill. Finally — about 1600 — the so-called *Bridge of Sighs* was added, built by *Antonio Contino* between the Doges' Palace and the prison (fig. 52). The Gothic façades of the Doges' Palace found an echo in the entire private architecture of Venice. The tracery of the arcades, the coloured patterns of the walls, the twisted corner columns, the battlements — everything was repeated and modified a thousandfold. The material employed was at first more simple than heretofore. The builders allowed an ample amount of the brick-wall to appear; they made more sparing use of incrustation, and tried altogether to replace by colour what was lost in preciousness of the stone. In one essential point these Gothic façades deviate from the older ones: a short loggia of few arches is placed on the upper storey, instead of the colonnades on both storeys. The colonnade on the groundfloor disappears. By the side of the porch appear here generally the

low windows of a mezzanine. The general effect only gains consequently in compactness and picturesque articulation. To this day we find this type in many examples along the whole Grand Canal, beginning from the present Hotel de l'Europe, and distributed all over the town. Only a few particularly interesting palaces need be mentioned among the crowd. The simplest form of this type — as yet without pierced tracery above the loggia — is presented by the most picturesquely situated small *Palazzo Sanudo-Van Axel*, close by Sta. Maria dei Miracoli (fig. 137). The *Palazzo Manolesso-Ferro* (now Grand Hotel) shows already that tracery, though only sparingly and cut off immediately

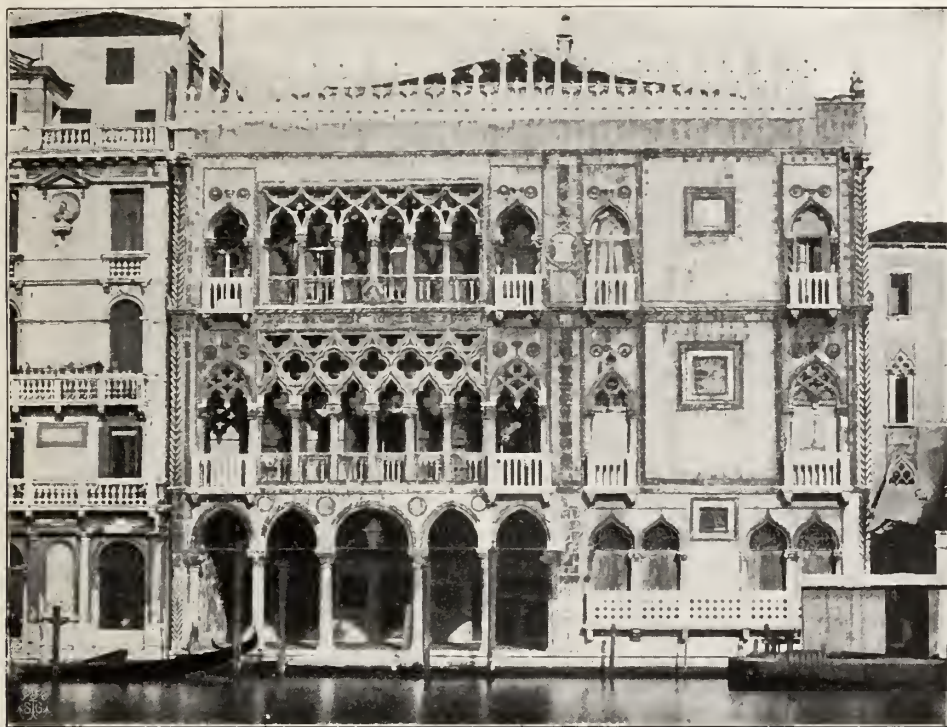


Fig. 31. Cà Doro.

above the arches by a cornice. Richly developed loggias can be found on the spacious, newly restored *Palazzo Cavalli* and on the *Palazzo Giovanelli*. The *Pisani* and *Foscari* palaces (fig. 32) are monumental in size. The latter, visible from a great distance and situated at the first bend of the Canal, also deserves attention for the threefold varied treatment of the loggia, which is most graceful on the third floor, added by the ill-fated Doge Francesco Foscari. Particularly rich tracery with two rows of quatrefoils one above the other is on the *Palazzo Cicogna* near S. Angelo Raffaele. Among the small façades, without loggia, that of the *Palazzo Contarini-Fasan* is famous for the beautiful, pierced balustrades of its balconies. The jewel among all these

buildings, in its very irregularity, the most Venetian of all Venetian palaces, is the *Cà Doro*, now preserved as a national monument, as it were, by its owner, the Baron Franchetti. That an unintelligent restoration had to disfigure the right half of the groundfloor by a row of balcony-windows in the place of the original little mezzanine windows; that at the same time a row of pointed arches on the cornice of the roof—defective at it was—was replaced by a tedious, embattled moulding, is certainly regrettable. Nevertheless, a more



Fig. 32. Palazzo Foscari.

charming sight cannot be imagined, than this small, gaily coloured marblehouse with its daintily chiselled windows and arcades above the green mirror of the Canal. (The direction of the building, on which a vast number of stonecutters, including Lombards and Tuscans, were employed together, was in the hands of *Giovanni* and *Bartolommeo Buon*.)

A long time had to pass, before the renaissance could establish itself and conquer completely in Venice. What Venice lacked, was the comprehension

of two of the most essential traits of the great movement of culture, which has been designated by this name. The free development of individuality was hindered by a strict, aristocratic regimen, and the passionate enthusiasm for antique art and poetry found only a faint echo in the circle of the splendid, though soberminded, mercantile nobili. The only channel, through which the renaissance forms could enter Venice unobstructedly at an early date, was decorative art. Its representatives, sculptors, goldsmiths and painters, hailed with joy the abundance of motifs that rushed upon them. But they were not exactly the most cultured supporters of the new style. With all the freshness



of their period they wallowed in the rich treasure of forms, without inquiring much into provenance and purpose. In no district of Italy, therefore, is the early renaissance marked by such gay confusion and jumbling of styles, as in Venice. Much of the Gothic still sustained its existence for a long time, in

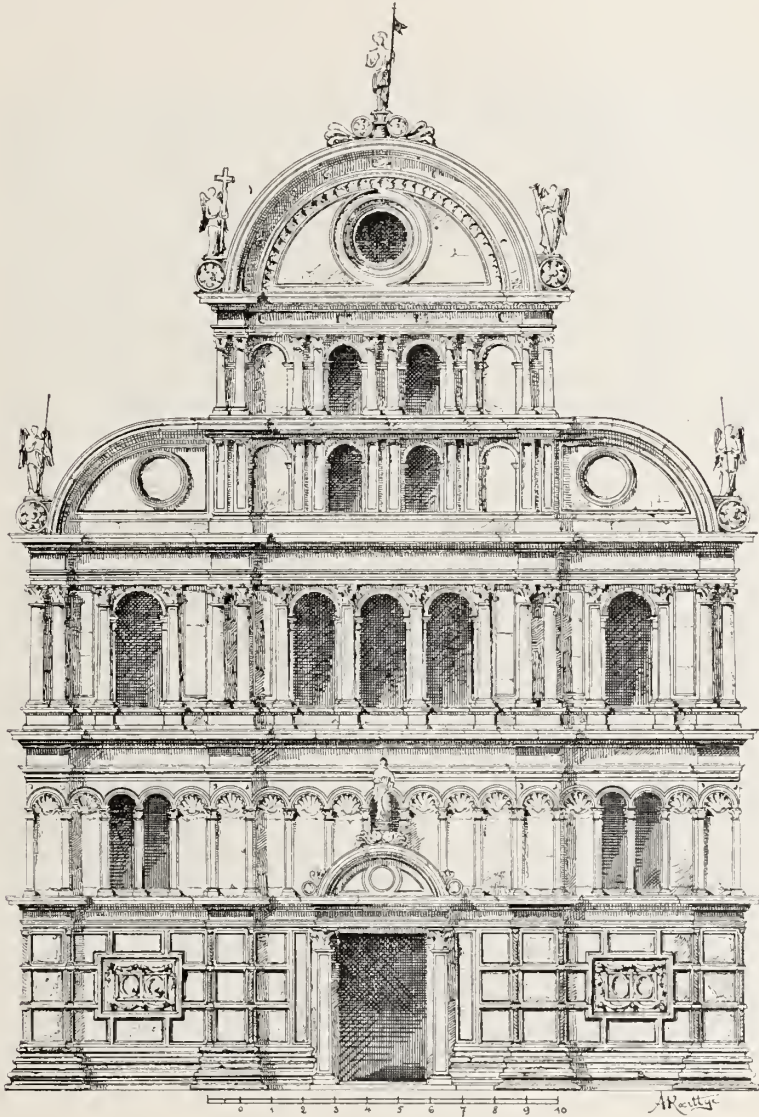


Fig. 33. Façade of S. Zaccaria.

spite of the ill-will borne by the Italians with but few exceptions against the severe Gothic. At the same time half forgotten Romanesque, nay Oriental, reminiscences made their reappearance — geometrical circular patterns, gracefully interlinked by bands. Even in purely architectural tasks the examples furnished for domed buildings by the early mediaeval churches were repeatedly fallen back upon. Fortune would have it, that the very turn of the fifteenth century marked

a zenith in the power and prosperity of the Republic. Orders were plentiful and economy was unnecessary in the use of precious stones for incrustation.

It is not easy to pass a judgement on the many buildings which were erected during this time, from 1460 to 1540 approximately. It depends on one's point of view. One thing is certain: they all without exception are a



Fig. 34. Interior of S. Zaccaria.

source of great delight to the unlearned, superficial observer. He, on the other hand, who is well versed in the different styles and loves a clear, architectural disposition, may perhaps condemn everything. He may, in the face of these multi-coloured, many-storied façades, rightly find fault with the "cabinet-makers' spirit" of Venetian architecture, which dissolves every architectural form into ornamental forms. But one may admit this, and yet love and praise the buildings of Venice, if one considers, that all architecture is a growth of its

soil. Here, in restricted space, and above the mirror of the water — this cannot be repeated sufficiently often —, the bulding must produce its effect from close proximity by variegated decoration, since it cannot produce an effect at a distance by a noble articulation of the whole. A Romanesque chancel would simply be quite ineffective, say on the Campo San Zaccaria. And therefore we must pardon such Venetian builders as the Lombardi, Bergamaschi and Scarpagnini their styleless whims, for theirs is the last thoroughly Venetian style of architecture, which would be impossible anywhere else in the world.



Fig. 35. S. Michele di Murano.

The pure, international and impersonal architecture of the late renaissance, headed by its severe master Palladio, made its entry into the lagoon quite early enough. The consideration of this period has this advantage over that of the earlier times, that we have henceforth to deal with personalities who direct the developement, and no longer with anonymous groups of monuments. It is above all *Pietro Solari*, called *Lombardo*, who, as the head of a numerous tribe of artists, acquires a decisive influence on architecture as well as on sculpture. His cognomen in itself betrays, whence the Venetians in the first place derived their renaissance.

The earliest monument of the new style, the church of *San Zaccaria* (commenced in 1458) cannot, it is true, with any certainty be credited to any



of the known Lombardi (fig. 33 and 34). A certain *Antonio di Marco Gambello* is mentioned at its first architect up to the year 1477. He commenced the choir in the late Gothic style, polygonal and with a gallery, and also the groundfloor of the façade with its coloured, incrustated panels and the twisted, tiny corner columns of the pilasters. The further building was, on the other hand, kept entirely in the sense of the early Venetian renaissance; the domes



Fig. 36. Interior of S. Maria dei Miracoli.

and semi-domes of the choir and of the radiating chapels, and particularly the façade. Divided into five storeys solely for the sake of decorative effect, and each storey again intersected by niches and windows, it presents a type of the Venetian jewel-box architecture. The semicircular termination of the pediment — a reminiscence of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's — determined the entire course of this period of style. The technique of working the stone in flat and plastic ornaments is here, as usually in Venice, extremely neat and pleasing. — A similar façade,

simplified and smaller in its proportions, is that of the cemetery-church of *S. Michele di Murano*. In this case, however, more attention should be given to the very graceful screen which separates a Western vestibule from the body of the church, and to the domed Cappella Emiliana by *Guglielmo Bergamasco* (1530) with its rich ornamental sculptures, than to the exterior. Façades of the same type occur furthermore on *S. Giobbe* (with a splendid porch) and on the church of the *Gesuali*. Another group of churches deserve special attention



Fig. 37. Scuola di San Rocco.

for their disposition of space. They are based on the pattern of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's and of the smaller Romanesque domed churches (*S. Fosca* in *Torcello*, *S. Giacomo di Rialto*). The central part of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's is repeated fairly exactly in *S. Giovanni e Crisostomo*, only more richly articulated with the means at the disposal of renaissance art. The most beautiful developement of the same idea is in *San Salvatore*, a masterpiece of *Tullio Lombardo*. Completed in its chief parts only since 1530 after a lengthy interruption, the building, in the purity of the separate forms, inclines already towards the late renaissance.

Venice.



An attic appears here first above the pilasters which lean against main piers. And yet the whole high, domed interior is permeated with the spirit of the dainty early renaissance and differs perceptibly from the interiors of the cold and serious late renaissance. The tedious baroque façade dates from the year 1663. —

None of the above mentioned churches can compare with *Sta. Maria dei Miracoli* (fig. 36) as regards undisturbed homogeneity of the general aspect. The neat little temple seems to be cast in one piece as it were. As the habitation



Fig. 38. Palazzo dei Camerlenghi.

of a miraculous picture of the Virgin it was built by *Pietro Lombardo* in eight years (1481—1489) from donations which flowed in profusely. Seen from without it appears as a precious reliquary on a grand scale. Especially the semicircular pediment on the façade suggests the lid of a coffer. The outer walls are intersected by dark pilasters on a light ground, between which the panels are incrustated very neatly, but quite unnecessarily, in geometrical patterns. The interior, encased in a rich, coffered ceiling under a barrel vault, has no aisles; the choir is raised like a terrace; by the entrance is a nuns' choir. The remarkably dainty tendril and figure ornaments by which all panels are covered, are a rich source for all decorative artists. From 1505 to 1515 *Pietro Lombardo*



directed the decoration of the *Cappella Zen* in the church of S<sup>t</sup> Mark. His famous palace will be referred to later.

The houses of meeting of the congregations, which were called *scuole* in Venice, form a link between the ecclesiastical and the secular buildings. According

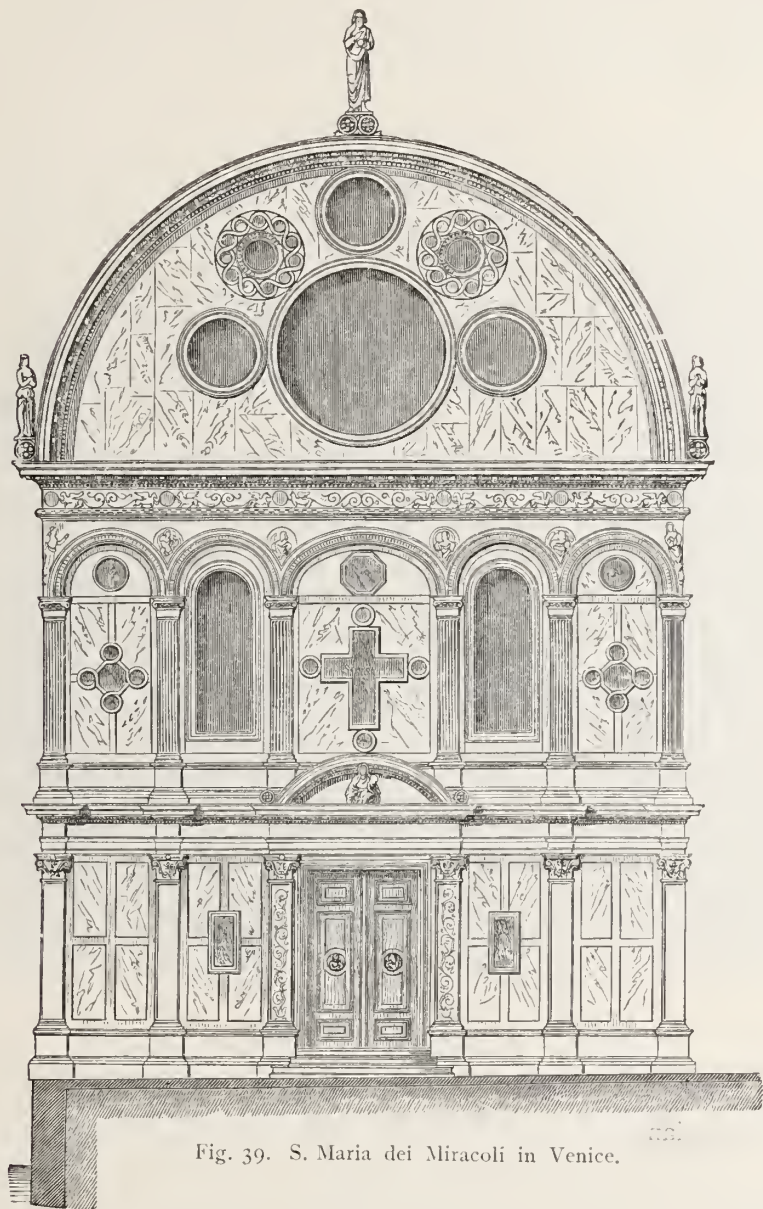


Fig. 39. S. Maria dei Miracoli in Venice.

to their destination they are arranged as halls, with generally only a few side-chambers attached to the meeting-room. The finest among them belong to the early renaissance. The first place must be given to the *Scuola di San Marco*. The extensive building consists of two wings joined at right angles, the longer of which — the North East wing — is situated on the canal, whilst the South

West wing which forms the main façade, adjoins the church of S. Giovanni e Paolo. The façade is an improved pendant to that of San Zaccaria. The porch is overtopped by, rather than enclosed in, an arch on an all too slender pair of columns. A well known peculiarity are the reliefs in perspective on the groundfloor — beautifully worked, but only trivial things withal. — Only the fore-court with a splendid porch is preserved of the *Scuola San Giovanni Evangelista*, near the Frari, probably likewise a building of Pietro Lombardo's.



Fig. 40. Palazzo Dario.

(Note the monumental eagle of the Evangelist in the lunette of the arch.) The early Venetian renaissance appears in a higher stage of development in the *Scuola di San Rocco*, commenced by *Santo Lombarda*, but finished in its present shape in 1550 by *Antonio Scarpagnino* (fig. 37). The cabinetmakers' spirit of the time is here almost entirely conquered, and every part shows the striving after logical articulation and intelligent design of the decoration. The projecting columns, which articulate the two-storied façade, have an equally original and charming adornment in the shape of a wreath of leaves, which lies loosely on the shaft and happily mitigates its excessive slenderness. The



division of the circular-arched windows on the groundfloor into two smaller arches which support a circle, is an echo of Gothic tracery. The pretty motif reoccurs now and then on the palatial buildings. The general impression of graceful splendour is inimitable. After this the other two buildings of Scarpagnino, the façade of *San Sebastiano* and the *Fabbriche vecchie di Rialto* fall curiously flat through soberness and intentional purity of style. More graceful, and yet related to the manner of Scarpagnino, is the *Palazzo dei Camerlenghi* near the Rialto bridge, by Guglielmo Bergamasco (fig. 38).



Fig. 41. Scuola di San Marco (Hospital).

Among the palaces on the Grand Canal the *Palazzo Dario* (1450) represents the earliest type of Venetian renaissance with playful incrustation and ornaments in low relief (fig. 40). The larger *Palazzi Manzoni* and *Contarini delle figure*, more carefully disposed, with broad bands at the foot of each storey, belong to the last which show that light decoration in coloured disks and shields. Another type, without pergola, but with the coupled arched windows of the Scuola di San Rocco, will be found in the *Palazzi Corner-Spinelli* and *Vendramin-Calergi* (fig. 42). The Palazzo Corner is very distinctly articulated by enormously wide pilasters; the Palazzo Vendramin, built since 1481 by *Pietro Lombardo*,



probably after plans by *Moro Coducci*, is the largest and finest of the whole group. Put together with firm columniation, it yet almost seems to float above the mirror of the water, with the light rows of arches of its upper storeys. Its roof is sacred to lovers of music, for under it Richard Wagner breathed his last.

During the early renaissance period the Piazza, too, was given on the whole its present shape by some new buildings. *Bartolommeo Buon* seems to have been the leading architect. First, in 1466, the pilaster-building of the clock-tower was commenced (completed possibly by *Pietro Lombardo*). Soon after, the *old Procuratie*, the official quarters of the Procurators of S<sup>t</sup> Mark and offices of numerous authorities, were erected. Both buildings are of comparatively small innate merit. Some parts, such as the trumpery battlements on the main cornice of the Procuratie, are absolute faults, and yet one could not wish for a more distinguished and quiet framing for the square, than the long arcades of this building. The eye passes over them, undisturbed until it finds a resting-place on the magnificent picture of San Marco. Whilst the part played by Bartolommeo in these two works is not quite clearly established, we know for certain that he was the master who completed the *Campanile* of the church of S<sup>t</sup> Mark. The smooth stone-obelisk, under the weight of which the bell-loft with its arches seemed to shrink together, was perhaps in itself clumsy, and yet it formed the best crowning of the mighty shaft of the tower. Recent careful investigations of the foundations of the Campanile have revealed some weakness which may cause a new site to be chosen for the new building.—One more building of this period must here be mentioned: the *Fondaco de' Tedeschi* (now General Post office) by the Rialto bridge. True enough, it is now a bare stone-cube which is only given life by the openings of the windows, but once, when Giorgione's and Titian's frescoes adorned its walls, it was perhaps the most beautiful house in Venice.



Fig. 42. Palazzo Vendramin.

THE churches and palaces of Venice had retained their local character at the time of the early renaissance, because their builders were not yet quite at home in the new style. Their very ignorance gave their works a flavour of naive freshness. But all this changed with the increasing knowledge of the nature of the renaissance style. The ingenuousness vanished. If the early renaissance had spoken in Venetian dialect, the late renaissance expressed itself in Tuscan book language. With ever loudening voice the great artists of Italy proclaimed architecture to be subject to exalted principles, so that no one, who would not be considered a banal person was allowed to deviate from their example. What was the nature of the new style, that made it so thoroughly different from its precursors? Unlike to Gothic art, it was no longer "rhythm of movement" — if I may borrow Burekhardt's beautiful expression —, but rather the *harmonious articulation of the masses*. It was here desirable to have stronger shadows, than had been used by the early renaissance; but all decoration that did not serve this ideal purpose was superfluous, if not

disturbing. The forms were borrowed from antique Roman fragments, and the enthusiasm for antiquity kept a jealous watch over the preservation of these forms in their purity. And yet, compared with the preceding period of Gothic style, the artist enjoyed greater liberty. The plan and the separate parts of the building were no longer influenced by a severe, constructive law; the decisive element was, on the contrary, the harmony of the impression, the beautiful appearance. No doubt, even here severe laws were in force, but they were very subtle, esthetic laws which could not be circumscribed by strict



Fig. 43. San Giorgio dei Greci.

formulas — notwithstanding all attempts on the part of the Italian scribes of the period.

The new style had its home in Florence. Soon, however, and to a higher degree than any other style, it advanced its claim on general application. As early as the middle of the sixteenth century, Palladio's works presented renaissance architecture in a purity which was not only impersonal, but even a little international. It has, as a matter of fact, found its way over the whole world.

The buildings which henceforth sprang up in Venice, are, it is true, supremely important for the history of the renaissance, but they are no longer like their



precursors a growth of Venetian soil. We shall be most interested in those, which at least aim at a local character.

*Michele Sanmicheli*, a Veronese who had received his training in Bramante's school, deserves to be mentioned as first architect of the late renaissance in Venice. The numerous internal wars of Italy caused him generally to place



Fig. 44. Palazzo Grimani.

his great gifts in the service of the art of fortification. Thus he has gradually renovated the fortresses of the Papal States and of the Republic of S<sup>t</sup> Mark. However, sufficient time was left to him, to build a few palaces in Verona and Venice, of which the *Palazzo Grimani* (fig. 44) on the Grand Canal, now the Court of Appeal, deserves special attention. When it was built — about 1550 — it must have dwarfed its whole surroundings, and even now, with the

three enormous, arched windows of its upper storeys, it is the most imposing representative of renaissance architecture on the Canal.

About the same time when Sanmicheli entered the service of the Republic as constructor of fortifications, the Florentine *Jacopo Sansovino* came to Venice. He had been one of the artists, whom the puritanic mind of Pope Hadrian VI. had induced to escape from Rome. Already at that time, in 1523, he had visited Venice. But only four years later he settled there permanently and received soon after the important appointment of a *proto de supra*, or chief



Fig. 45. The Library of San Marco, now Royal Palace.

inspector of the ecclesiastical and of most governmental buildings of Venice (with the exception of the Doges' Palace). If Sanmicheli, in all his buildings, had remained true to the serious spirit of Bramantesque architecture, the versatile Sansovino made concessions to the Venetian leaning towards luxurious, festive splendour. With Titian, who had the same age, he soon made friends, and during his long life — he only died in 1570 — he occupied a similar leading position in the architecture and sculpture of Venice, as Titian did in her painting. From his school emanated the next generation of Venetian sculptors and architects, and some important buildings have left upon the general picture of the town a stronger impress of his personality, than of most of his followers.

But unfortunately his artistic character was not on the level of his talent; he sometimes gave himself licence and produced, by the side of immortal work, some careless and mannered things.

Of his churches *San Giorgio dei Greci* is the most notable (fig. 43). The two-storied front leans so much to the style of the Lombardi, as regards the details of the decoration, that the collaboration of a member of that family, of *Santo Lombardo*, has been taken for granted. The interior, a nave terminating in a barrel vault with a central dome, is traversed by an ikonostasis adorned with Byzantine paintings, and is not particularly interesting. For the tedious edifice of *S. Francesco della Vigna* Sansovino can perhaps not be held entirely responsible, in so far as the monk *Francesco di Giorgio*, who had some knowledge of architecture, made some corrections in his plan. The façade was subsequently added by *Palladio*. — Still less important are Sansovino's later churches of *San Martino* and *San Giuliano*. — On the other hand he gained well deserved and immortal fame with the secular government buildings of the *Biblioteca* (fig. 45) and the *Mint* (Zecca) (fig. 46). Both were commenced at the same time, 1536; they stand wall against wall and form the most striking contrast that may well be imagined. In masterly fashion Sansovino knew how to suggest the destination of the buildings in their external shape. With its rude rustic blocks which form the walls and pilasters, with the walled-up arches of its ground floor, this Mint is closed threateningly against any uninvited person who would force his way into its treasure chambers. The splendid arcades of the Library, on the other hand, are opened to all who may wish to congregate under its roof for the purpose of peaceful study. The long extension of the building with its moderate height can in no way be objected to, because, as Burckhardt rightly observes, the whole, as an arcade building, could be allowed to be of indefinite length. The arrangement of the series of arches is incomparably beautiful. On the groundfloor they rest on simple piers with projecting columns, on the top-floor on pairs of fluted columns. Above all there are few buildings in the world, that produce as rich an effect of light and shade. If fault must be found in spite of such great merits, it should be with the crowning parts of the building. The balustrade of the roof is certainly too heavy, the upper frieze perhaps too high, and the garlands too, by which it is decorated, appear far too weighty for the little boys who are burdened with them. Yet it must be confessed, that this very boldness of the relief is of advantage to the effect of light and shade.

By the side of these two masterpieces the *Loggetta* under the ill-fated Campanile could not hold its own as an architectural effort. The enormous attic weighed the portico down into the ground, an impression which was still further intensified by the fact that the lower parts of the groundfloor disappeared



behind the projecting balustrade. The greatest merit of the dainty building lay in the sculptured decoration. — The *Fabbriche nuove*, which Sansovino added to Scarpagnino's older *Fabbriche* by the Rialto bridge, do not deserve special attention. On the other hand he enriched the Grand Canal with some palaces which became models for later periods. This applies particularly to the *Palazzo Corner Cà grande* with its high, rustic groundfloor and the richly articulated rows of arches on the upper storeys (fig. 47). More simple is the *Palazzo Manin* (formerly Dolfin) with a pergola of four arches in the middle of the upper storeys and an arcade running across the entire groundfloor. These palaces of Sansovino and Sanmicheli are distinguished from the older ones already by

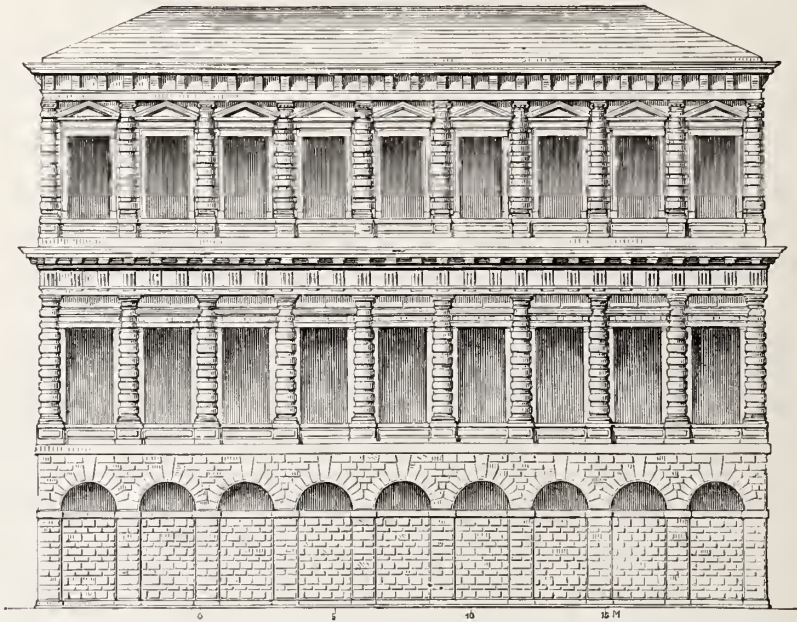


Fig. 46. The Zecca.

their spaciousness. The noble late renaissance was loth to agree to the smaller dimensions which had just been suitable for the dainty Venetian Gothic. As a brilliant piece of decoration of Sansovino's late period the *scala d'oro* in the *Doges' Palace* deserves special notice. An enormous quantity of plastic and painted decoration is here crowded into an unfavourable and disproportionately narrow space — another of Sansovino's concessions to the ostentatiousness of his employers.

During the last decades of his life Sansovino found in Venice a rival who, it is true, was not his equal as regards versatility of talent, but, on the other hand, was his superior by a long way in architectural gifts and intense seriousness of character: *Andrea Palladio*, born in 1518 at Vicenza which was then under the sway of Venice. Palladio was only architect, but marks as such the zenith

of the developement of renaissance architecture. For his art his name is of historical importance. Deified by some, others have reproached him with being sober and soulless. Yet it is worth remembering, that the originality of the greatest artists consists sometimes not so much in their individual peculiarities, as in a perfect harmony between their intentions and their productions.

Palladio has remained unequalled as regards truly brilliant feeling for space. It is true though, that this feeling held such complete sway over him,



Fig. 47. Palazzo Corner Cà grande.

that he paid little heed to anything that was not immediately connected with it—to ornament and to colour. The antique remains of Roman buildings had been his school, and he has understood them and employed their language of form in each case with a sureness, which again is unexampled. That such a man, who was lawfulness personified, would make no concessions and did not take local peculiarities in consideration, is only natural. His finest churches are in Venice, but they might as well be in Vicenza or elsewhere. He has received much praise for the masterly disposition of his church of San Giorgio on the island, which makes it the most beautiful completion of the picture of the Piazzetta. This praise goes, however, beyond the mark. The site had been decided upon, the campanile completed, and the adjoining cloisters were

being built, before Palladio arrived (1565). Considered by themselves his churches are closely related to each other, especially as regards the exterior: one solitary columniation supports the central chief pediment; the aisles with half pediments lean against the central building; the surface of the wall between the columns is relieved by niches. At *San Giorgio* the main porch appears sunk as it were between the high pedestals of the neighbouring columns, nor is it beautiful that the impost-moulding extends above the aisles behind the columns, thus cutting across the whole façade. Similar is the front of *S. Francesco della Vigna*. Both faults have been avoided on the church of the *Redentore* on the Giudecca (fig. 50). The interior too is here most beautiful, though less richly articulated than at San Giorgio; particularly brilliant is the view of the choir which is surrounded by a light gallery. The details of the capitals and mouldings show, as in all Palladio's work, an intentional and dignified simplicity. The coved ceiling on the other hand is almost chilling in its effect. At a later period the type of Palladio's façades is once more faithfully repeated in *S. Pietro di Castello* (by *Smeraldi* who perhaps made use of a design by Palladio). It is significant that Palladio, as far as we know, has not built a single palace in Venice. He evidently could not get reconciled to the restriction of space and to the peculiar Venetian customs.

Only a very small portion of what has been built in Venice after Palladio is worthy of general attention. The fame of the Rialto bridge (1587) is due more to the boldness of its design, than to its beauty. Two rows of shops and three streets extend across the water on a single, bold span. Its builder, *Antonio da Ponte*, had faced the competition of the greatest architects of Italy — of Michelangelo, Vignola, Sansovino and Scamozzi; Palladio, too, had in readiness a beautiful design for a bridge of three arches (fig. 51).

The same da Ponte deserved well for his successful restoration of the Doges' Palace after the fire of 1577; he is also responsible for the impressive rustic architecture of the *Prigioni*, which forms an excellent counterpart to Sansovino's Zecca, surpassing it perhaps as regards the harmony of the general effect (fig. 53). *Alessandro Vittoria* is of more importance as a sculptor, than as an architect (*Palazzo Balbi*, now Guggenheim). *Vincenzo Scamozzi*, the great theorist of later renaissance architecture, produced with his *new Procuratie* a fatiguing replica of Sansovino's Library, which he spoilt by the addition of a second storey. With his *Palazzo Contarini degli Scrigni* on the Grand Canal he varied the type of Sansovino's Palazzo Corner. A strange personality of the later period was *Baldassare Longhena*, the last architect whose numerous and peculiar buildings have helped to a considerable extent to give Venice its present physiognomy. He was an ardent soul with a most extravagant



fantasy which was now and then given free scope in some showy monument. Look at his *monument* of the Doge Pesaro at the Frari (fig. 76), which in its composition combines four gigantic negros, a couple of skeletons and two dragons. In architecture Longhena personifies that last phase the developement of the renaissance style, which strives after pictorial effects, as a contrast to the sober



Fig. 48. Golden Staircase (Scala d'oro) at the Doges' Palace.

correctness of the Palladians. In doing so he again takes into account the local character of Venice and is influenced rather by the early renaissance style of the Lombardi, than by the Roman baroque of the Bernini and Borromini. His principal work, the church of *Sta. Maria della Salute* is one of the most popular buildings of Venice (erected 1630—1656) and cannot be forgotten by anyone who has made the tour of the Grand Canal (fig. 54). The picturesque impression of the animated façades, of the beautiful cupola which rises from

a wreath of enormous volutes decorated with statues, is of exceeding splendour. One does not wish to see anything else in this place. That, strictly taken, the back cupola above the choir and the turrets by its sides destroy the homogeneity of the plan, did not interfere with the intentions of Longhena. Among his palaces the enormous *Palazzo Pesaro* marks the richest developement of the type which Sansovino had established with his *Palazzo Corner Cà*. Similar to it is the *Palazzo Rezzonico-Browning*. Where the means at his disposal were restricted, Longhena had recourse to the manner of the Lombardi by giving life to the walls by means of projecting panels (*Palazzi Giustinian Lolin* and *Mocenigo*).

What else has been created during this period and later by the more unimportant architects, may on the whole be passed over with a good conscience. Only the *Dogana di Mare* by *Giuseppe Belloni* will for all times take its assured place by the side of the Salute as a masterpiece of picturesque perspective.



Fig. 49. The Rialto Bridge.

## SCULPTURE.

**D**URING the middle-ages the different arts have not developed to such an extent, that each of them could have carried on a separate existence. Like a mother, Architecture held them gathered in her lap. Painting was tied to the walls as decoration, and Sculpture embellished the separate parts of the building. Only in modest shoots, as miniature painting and ivory carving, could both of them support an independent life. With their liberation commences the history of modern art.

In Venice this developement was longer delayed, than in the neighbouring districts of Upper and Central Italy. The causes were undoubtedly to be found in the brisk intercourse with the Orient. The Byzantine artists, the first teachers of the Venetians, were essentially decorators, and as such were more in favour of flat mosaic or low relief decoration, than of a sculpture with strong light and shade. The sculpture of the Venetians really differed from that of those Greeks only in so far as the workmanship was less delicate. Other differences of subject or form are scarcely to be found. A large quantity of such reliefs are still to be seen on the churches and palaces of Venice:

Venice,



intricate meanders, leaves, fruit-forms, and symbolic animals. They clothe many capitals at S<sup>t</sup> Mark's, wind round the wells and, in Torcello, the choir-screen, and sometimes, as on the lunette of the South East arch of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's, degenerate into childish puerility.

Thus things continued well into the thirteenth century.

It is very significant, that as late as 1233 the Doge Jacopo Tiepolo and

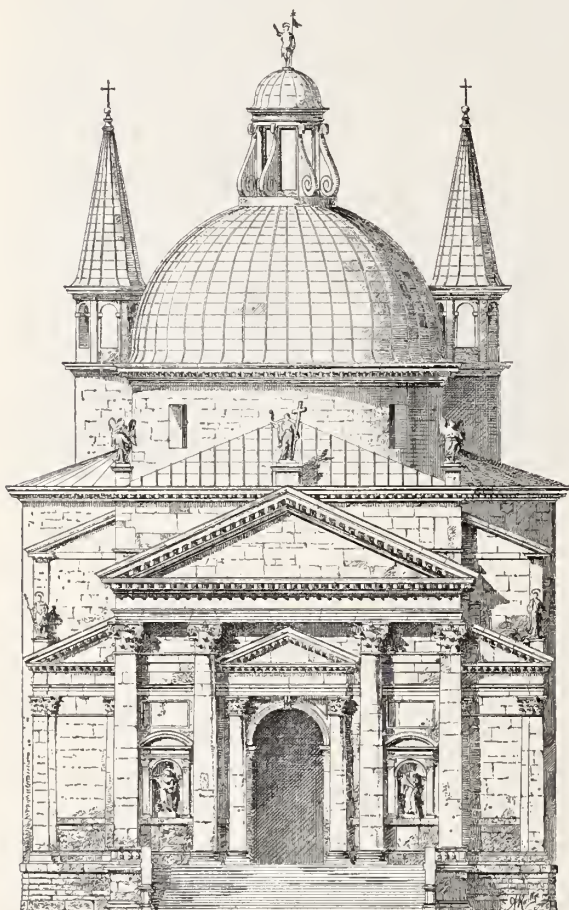


Fig. 50. Il Redentore.

his successor Marino Morosini were buried in ancient Christian sarcophagi (the former by the porch of S. Giovanni e Paolo and the latter in the vestibule of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's). The two *porphyry reliefs* with the embracing kings and queens on the South side of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's are imported from Byzantium. An isolated, more important effort in figural sculpture of that period is preserved in the columns of the *altar tabernacle* in the church of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's. (Two of these are still ancient Christian, but the other two copied from them in the twelfth century.) The narrow relief-bands which encircle the columns have, it is true, the appearance of much enlarged ivory sculptures.

The fourteenth century, which enriched Venice with the Doges Palace and with a flourishing original style of architecture, now also brought to a head a vitali-

sation of Venetian sculpture. The movement originated in Tuscany, where *Niccolo Pisano*, in following the antique, had refound an elevated style of plastic art. However, it was not so much the example of Niccolo, but of his son Giovanni, that became effective in Venice. At the beginning of the fourteenth century *Giovanni Pisano* had worked in the neighbouring Padua, simultaneously and in the same place with Giotto. His grand, realistic style appears in the earliest, important fourteenth century sculpture in Venice — in the statue of *S. Simeone profeta* (in the church devoted to the Saint) of the year 1317. The period immediately following has not attained again to the monu-

mentality of this work, although the same spirit of more loving observation of nature is also shown by the *Madonna reliefs* in the cloister of the *Carmine* (1340) and in the court of the *Academy*, the former convent of the *Carità* (1345), as well as by the statue of the *Virgin* on the porch of the *Frari*. The briskly animated reliefs of tendrils and figures on the archivolt over the niche of the central porch of *St Mark's* are probably a few decades earlier in date.

The tomb proved to be of the greatest importance for the development of sculpture. More and more the custom became established, of erecting monuments to the Doges and other men who had deserved well of the common weal, so that in them alone we can follow all the phases of Venetian sculpture. In doing so, we observe, how the tomb gradually loses its religious significance as a consecrated resting-place, and becomes a monument of glory, which only by tradition retains a claim to a place in the church. The two large churches of the mendicant orders became the favoured burial-grounds, so that *S. Giovanni e Paolo* in particular appears to us as a Pantheon of Venetian glory. The simplest type of the tomb-monument is a plain sarcophagus, supported by brackets and resting against the wall, either without any further decorations, or in a modest niche. The front of the sarcophagus is adorned with relief bands in the centre and at both sides (in some few cases also on the panels between). An early, modest example, without niche, is the tomb of *Arnoldo*

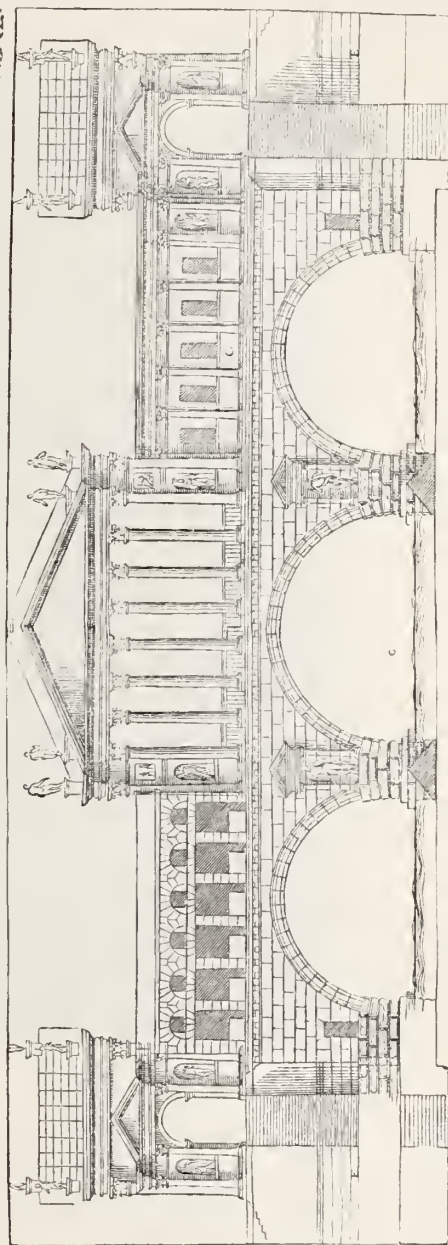


Fig. 51. Design for the Rialto Bridge by Palladio.

*Teutonico* (d. 1337) in the second, right hand chapel of the choir of the *Frari*. On the opposite sarcophagus of the Florentine ambassador *Duccio degli Alberti* (d. 1336) appeared for the first time, besides the effigy of the dead, two Virtues: Justice and Moderation. On the tomb of *St. Isidore* in the chapel

consecrated to him at *S<sup>t</sup> Mark's* the effigy of the departed is particularly valuable; the Doge *Andrea Dandolo*, the historian of Venice, who had founded this chapel, was buried soon after likewise in the church of *S<sup>t</sup> Mark* (1354 in the christening chapel). His monument reveals remarkably clearly the Tuscan influence in the motif of a curtain held by two angels and bordering the



Fig. 52. The Bridge of Sighs.

rectilinear niche of the tomb. A further enrichment of the wall-tomb can be found in the monument of the Doge *Marco Corner* (d. 1367) at *S. Giovanni e Paolo*. The departed rests on a bed of state; above it, along the wall, is a row of five niches, in which the figures of Saints are placed. The opposite monument of the Doge *Michele Morosini* (d. 1382) shows the Gothic type in its fully developed form (fig. 55). The niche is canopied by a richly sculptured arch which is flanked by two little turrets in the shape of tabernacles. Altogether



the decoration is most sumptuous and the mosaic of the Crucified Saviour under the arch is executed in noble style.

The last phase of developement of Gothic sculpture in Venice is connected with the name of the artists' family of the *Massegne*. The fact, that we have to regard them as a family, reveals the yet mediaeval method of corporative, rather than individual, work. Notwithstanding the clumsiness of the attitude and the uncertainty of the proportions, their figures appear as the forerunners of a new epoch in the individual life of the heads and in the softer flow of the drapery. The principal work of their earlier period is not in Venice. It is the large marble altar at S. Francesco in Bologna, authenticated as the work of the brothers Jacobello and Pierpaolo dalle Massegne. Nearly a



Fig. 53. The Prigioni (Prisons.)

decade later (1397) the statues of Mary and the Apostles were finished, which adorn the screen of S<sup>t</sup> Mark's—still more energetic in expression than the Bolognese sculptures. Pietro Paolo by himself has lately been recognized as the master of the splendid central window on the South side of the Doges' Palace. To *Polo nato de Fachomell* is due the modest wall-tomb of *Jacopo Cavalli* (d. 1384) at *S. Giovanni e Paolo* (Cappella di Pio V.). It is completely painted over and remains in spite of its mutilation—the statues of the virtues have been broken away—one of the finest Gothic tombs of Venice.

Marked by their style as works of the Massegne are, to mention only the more important ones: the two *Venier* tombs (of the Doge Antonio,' his wife and his daughter) at *S. Giovanni e Paolo* (fig. 56); the *altar* in the christening

chapel of the *Frari*, and the *Savello* monument in the same church. The equestrian statue of gilt wood, which here appears for the first time (1405), becomes subsequently the customary tribute paid by the Republic to the memory of her distinguished generals. — Kindred in style are among the sculptures of the Doges' Palace the following which must therefore here be mentioned: a number of capitals, as well as the corner-sculptures of *Adam and Eve* (fig. 57) and of *the Sin of Noah*.



Fig. 54. S. Maria della Salute.

It is again Tuscan influence that characterizes the period of transition from the Gothic to renaissance art in Venetian sculpture. The beautiful *high relief* of the *Judgement of Solomon*, on the corner of the Doges' Palace by the Porta della Carta, is the work of two Florentines — *Pietro di Niccolò* da Firenze and *Giovanni di Martino* da Fiesole (fig. 58). Not only the carefully considered composition of these five figures in such a difficult place, but even more the nobility of the forms of the body and of the drapery, raise this work above everything that had been produced by the earlier time of the Masegne. In one of their earlier sculptures, the tomb at *S. Giovanni e Paolo* of the Doge *Tommaso Mocenigo*, who had died in 1423, the same artists entered completely into the spirit of the Venetian tradition, but

only to ennoble it by further *spirituel* development. The sarcophagus with its figures and niches, and the row of Saints on the wall above, were older motifs. But both parts are here connected by the canopy which projects from the midst of that frame on the wall, and from which the folds of a curtain hang heavily over the bed. Thus the homogeneity of an ideal composition is produced in a novel manner (fig. 59).

Another Florentine, the so-called *Master of the Pellegrini Chapel* at S. Anastasia in Verona, was the creator of the overdecorated terracotta monument

which served as tomb for the *Beato Carissimo da Chioggia*. The tomb, erected in the right transept of the Frari, belonged to the Buon family, whence arose the erroneous supposition — immortalized by an inscription — that it is the resting-place of the Beato Pacifico Buon. The wealth of Florentine invention and beauty of form is here showered upon the old Venetian form of a niche-tomb under a pointed arch. (Everything is, however, badly mutilated.) The



Fig. 55. Tomb of the Doge Michele Morosini at S. Giovanni e Paolo.

twofold nature of this work of art has frequently puzzled the Italians and has even misled an industrious investigator of the history of Venetian art, to form the strange opinion, that he had here before his eyes an inflated German production (fig. 60).

The great master of the early Florentine renaissance, who was the moving power at the back of these artists and their works, *Donatello*, is himself represented in Venice by a carved wood statue of *S<sup>t</sup> John the Baptist*, which he sent from Padua in 1451 (fig. 61). The figure — placed in one of the left



hand chapels of the choir of the Frari — shows the Baptist as an ascetic recluse whose gaze is as it were turned within. It is remarkable, that the Venetians did not seem to be anxious to possess more from the hand of Donatello who created a number of his chief works in their immediate vicinity, in Padua. Perhaps he was too acerb for Venetian taste. About the same time an able Milanese sculptor, *Matteo dei Raverti* who, among other things, has created the



Fig. 56. Tomb of the Doge Antonio Venier at S. Giovanni e Paolo.

finest of the Borromean tombs on the Isola Bella, was repeatedly occupied in Venice, but, as far as one can see, chiefly on decorative sculpture (on the *Cà d'oro*, the *Ospedale della Misericordia* and the *porch of S. Giovanni and Paolo*).

Another Lombard, *Antonio Rizzo* of Verona, was given the opportunity of a far more comprehensive activity. The versatile man is already known to us as one of the architects of the Doges' Palace; he was employed in 1475 as ingeneer of fortifications for the defence of Scutari; but his most important

efforts were in the domain of plastic art. Unfortunately his activity was suddenly interrupted, when, in 1498, he was threatened with prosecution for extensive embezzlements and had to flee to Ancona.

The most important among his works are unquestionably the figures of Adam and Eve, which he executed for two niches on the Torricella of the Doges' Palace opposite the giants' staircase. The *Eve*, with the somewhat



Fig. 57. Adam and Eve; group on the South-West corner of the Doges' Palace.

meagre form of her body, has not unaptly been compared with her companions in old Flemish painting; but the *Adam* is a masterpiece of the first order (fig. 62 and 63). The apple in his left hand has only the value of a traditional attribute. With breathless surprise, with his large eyes wide open, the first of men seems here to encounter the wonders of the world. The forms of the body are copied from nature with all the ingenuousness of the early renaissance. That Eve did not fare better, is probably only the fault of the model. It was



a privilege of the early renaissance, that it could be very realistic and yet at the same time monumental. Both these qualities are combined to a high degree by the male bronze bust at the Museo Correr, which has been pronounced to be the portrait of *Andrea Loredan* — whether rightly or not I can not say (fig. 64). At any rate it must be taken to be a work of Rizzo. — His famous



Fig. 58. The Judgement of Solomon.  
Group on the West side of the Doges' Palace.

out of his door. The ideal figures of the Virtues compare very unfavourably with it, but this can hardly cause surprise with an artist with such a pronounced tendency towards observation of Nature, as Rizzo.

The result of a tiresome confusion of the artists' names was, that for a long time the *Tomb of the Doge Francesco Foscari* (d. 1457), which faces the Tron monument, was likewise believed to be a work of Rizzo's. It is however by another *Antonio*, whose family-name was *Bregno* and who had immigrated

tomb of the Doge *Niccolò Tron* at the Frari is the first of the large renaissance tombs of Venice. It is, by the way, at the same time a good instance of the thirst for glory of that period (fig. 65); that is: the artistic splendour was in obverse ratio to the importance of the glorified prince who breathed his last in 1433, after two years of inactive, uneventful government. The construction suggests on the one hand the many stories of the façades in the Lombardi style, and on the other hand, in the row of niches with figures above the sarcophagus, the disposition of the older Gothic tombs of Venice. The most valuable part is the effigy of the Doge who appears again two stories below his sarcophagus, with the air of a "slim", old house-father who steps towards us



from Como. As a matter of fact the Foscari and the Tron monuments have hardly anything in common. In the one we found the fully developed early renaissance, whilst in the other the artist has still wrestled everywhere with the new style. The general arrangement, the pediment with its creepers and the consoles of the sarcophagus are pure Gothic, with them we find Corinthian columns and pilaster capitals, and an antique cantilever. The female figures



Fig. 59. Tomb of the Doge Tommaso Mocenigo at S. Giovanni e Paolo.

of the Virtues are very beautiful, especially on the front of the sarcophagus. In any case the monument is far more closely related to the most important of the native Venetian sculptors of that time, to *Bartolommeo Buon* whose *Porta della Carta* has already been mentioned, than to Antonio Rizzo. It was robbed of its most valuable adornment, when, at the time of the French occupation, the mob destroyed the group of Francesco Foscari kneeling before the lion of St Mark. (At present newly restored.) Further examples of Buon's sculpture,

which was a little heavy in comparison with that of the masters of the renaissance, are presented by the figures on *Sta Maria dell' Orto*, by the altar of the *Madonna dei Mascoli* and by the sculptures on the pediment of *S<sup>t</sup> Mark's* (fig. 16). His talent led Buon more towards decorative, than towards figural sculpture.



Fig. 60. Tomb of Beato Carissimo da Chioggia  
(generally described as Tomb of Beato Pacifico Buon).

If the above mentioned masters were of importance, in so far as they cleared the way for the renaissance in the plastic art of Venice, the same Lombardi, whose style was decisive for the fully developed early renaissance in the architecture of the town, have played an analogous part in Venetian sculpture. The Lombardi were not — let me repeat — of Venetian descent; yet they soon absorbed the views of their new surroundings so completely,



that they appear as the most Venetian of all artists of their kind and of their period. *Pietro Lombardo* took with him from his native soil a treasure of most dainty decorative forms. In Venice he learnt how to ennoble his style of figural sculpture from antique Greek examples, with which one could here get acquainted better than anywhere else in Italy. Perhaps his inclination tended at first more towards serious, figural works. The statues of *S<sup>t</sup> Jerome* and *S<sup>t</sup> Paul* at *Santo Stefano* give rise to this idea; but the taste of the Venetians happened to favour the gaily decorative in art, and *Pietro Lombardo* submitted to this taste. In the total of the works, which he and his sons *Tullio* and *Antonio* have left, decoration takes the leading position. All the gay plays of fancy, all the animal shapes and scroll-work chiselled by them, are distinguished as much by wealth of invention, as by exquisitely dainty workmanship. Besides the principal work of the school, the church of the *Miracoli*, the domed main chapel of the *Choir of S. Giobbe* and the *Cappella Giustiniani* should be noted. Even quite apart from such purely architectural decorative works, there is hardly a plastic work of the school, that is not decorative in character in its essential features.

Fate would have it, that at this very period four Doges died within the space of five years (1473—1478): *Niccolò Tron*, *Niccolò Marcello*, *Pietro Mocenigo* and *Andrea Vendramin*. Through this coincidence the sculptors were faced with the same problem four times in succession, and each time they had plentiful means at their disposal.

We have seen, how *Rizzo* had solved his task with his *Tron* monument. Very different was the treatment by the Lombardi of the next monument which was erected to the Doge *Niccolò Marcello* (formerly at *S. Marina*, now at *S. Giov. e Paolo*, fig. 66). The composition is far more compact: the one and only arched niche with the sarcophagus of the defunct is flanked by smaller niches in two stories. The bed of state, on which the figure rests, is placed on the sarcophagus proper. The repetition of this part, however, hardly disturbs the effect, since the modest coffin appears altogether only as a pedestal. The greatest care is bestowed upon the ornamental adornment of the couch, of the pilasters, arches and friezes; on the



Fig. 61. *S<sup>t</sup> John the Baptist*, wooden statue by *Donatello*.



other hand the artists have carefully avoided to place the personality of the Doge vividly and immediately before the spectator. Compared with the Tron tomb, the allegorical female figures are also lifeless. If everything expresses here the sacred peace of the tomb, the monument of *Pietro Mocenigo* sends forth the sound of trumpets of fame. Here Death has been overcome. As in a triumph, the victorious admiral, standing on his sarcophagus, is carried by



Fig. 62. Adam by Antonio Rizzo.



Fig. 63. Eve by Antonio Rizzo.

Torricella of the Doges' Palace.

three warriors. The Ducal cloak is opened, so as to show the breast-plate. This Mocenigo must have had a splendid, defiant head. Rizzo would probably have turned it to far better advantage, but even in this somewhat stiff effigy it is imposing. In his noticeable endeavour of introducing as many figures as possible, Pietro Lombardo has worked the receding side portions of the monument into niches, from the dark background of which the shapes of

warriors stand forth in full light. But unfortunately these slender lads are without a vestige of individual life (fig. 67).

Similarly disposed — without the rows of niches at the sides and with the recumbent figure of the defunct — is the monument of *Jacopo Marcello* at the Frari. — The maturest solution of the task of the princely tomb can be seen in the last monument of this group, the one erected to *Andrea Vendramin*. Fame praises it as the finest of the Venetian tomb memorials, and rightly so.



Fig. 64. Bust of Andrea Loredan by Antonio Rizzo.

But unfortunately in its present condition it is mutilated and foolishly altered. The architectural construction is more accentuated than hitherto. Two high Corinthian columns support the arch of the niche. On the sarcophagus the chorus of the Virtues seems to bewail the dead who reposes above their head. At one time Adam and Eve occupied the niches at both sides. A period, that objected to their nudeness has however removed them and replaced, them by the two shield-bearers from the pedestals at the sides of the monument, although the position is far too important for their character. The purely





Fig. 65. Tomb of the Doge Niccolò Tron at S. Maria dei Frari by Antonio Rizzo.



ornamental side is here subdued, and the figures are worked out much more delicately and have more soul, than is generally the case with the Lombardi. What fascinates, however, the beholder, is the harmony of the whole. A pure accord is sounded by all parts of the beautiful tomb (fig. 68).

Of the many other works of the Lombardi, which are still to be seen



Fig. 66. Tomb of the Doge Niccolò Marcello at S. Giovanni e Paolo.

distributed over the churches of Venice, one of the earliest that deserves mention is the tomb of the Doge *Pasquale Malipiero* (d. 1462) at *S. Giovanni e Paolo*. To a later period belong the large relief of the *Coronation of the Virgin* at *S. Giovanni e Crisostomo*, the charming altar with *S<sup>t</sup> John the Baptist and S<sup>t</sup> Peter* at *San Martino*, and the relief of the *Pietà* in the Capella Gussoni at *San Lio* — all probably by *Tullio Lombardo*. The two small altars

Venice.

of *S<sup>t</sup> Paul* and *S. Jacopino* at *S<sup>t</sup> Mark's*, on the other hand, are obviously the work of *Pietro Lombardo*.

The merits of the Vendramin monument, which place it above the others of its kind, are probably due to the collaboration of a sculptor who, trained in the school of the Lombardi, soon surpassed them by a long way — of *Alessandro Leopardi*. His name impresses itself without difficulty on every



Fig. 67. Tomb of the Doge Pietro Mocenigo at S. Giovanni e Paolo.

visitor to Venice as that of the master of the three wonderful *flagstaffs* in front of *S<sup>t</sup> Mark's* (fig. 69). In the articulation and decoration of their bronze pedestals Leopardi has hit upon the right thing so completely, that for all time to come he has set an example which has been copied in endless variations. In his figures Leopardi is more graceful, than the Lombardi. He has created a beautiful type of a slender, curly-headed youth of somewhat sentimental expression in the two armed figures on the Vendramin tomb. Two

nude shield-bearers from the same monument have found their way to the Berlin Museum. Of noble beauty are also his bronze figures of the Virtues which surround the sarcophagus of *Cardinal Zen* at *S<sup>t</sup> Mark's*. In Florence a man of this type would perhaps have found a succession of great tasks, which might have helped him to develop into one of the leading masters of his period. In Venice he had to exhaust his best powers on decorative works.

It is significant, that the Venetians would not entrust a great task of monumental sculpture to any of their native masters. For the execution of the monument, which the general Bartolommeo Colleoni had stipulated in his will as a return-gift from the Republic for his fortune, a competition was opened to the leading sculptors of Italy. *Andrea Verrocchio's* design was accepted and the commission given to him. The statue was the last, and at the same time the largest and finest work of the master who counted a *Lionardo* among his pupils. Never again have horse and horseman been immortalized in art, cast thus completely, as it were, in one mould. It is more than a portrait of the Condottiere Colleoni who for good payment fought the wars of the Republic against *Francesco Sforza*: it is the type of the warlike hero of an age, when morality counted for nothing, reckless determination and contempt of mankind for everything. The charger prances heavily — one might imagine it passing along a bloody battlefield. In heavy armour and welded, as it were, to his saddle, is seated the horseman with an expression on his face, which can only be described as terrible. Verrocchio has here — notwithstanding the seeming calmness of the attitude — dared a degree of expression which borders close on exaggeration. A little more, and the hero will become a swash-buckler. Only an artist as sensitive, as he was brilliant, could have ventured to go so far. Verrocchio died over the casting. *Allessandro Leopardi* then looked after the final execution. His name can be found on the girth of the horse. His work is also the beautiful socle with its six Corinthian columns and the richly decorated frieze. It appears to many much too high, and, indeed, it would not suffer, if it were shortened by removing the two lowest steps (fig. 70 and 71).

The Colleoni was the last and grandest monument of the early renaissance in Italy. An entirely new era in the developement of Venetian sculpture, as well as architecture, is marked by the advent of the late renaissance. Of course — I hasten to add — the two periods of style do not stand here in such striking contrast, as say in Florence, where since the beginning of the sixteenth century the time of individualising, of dainty and pleasing decoration, was followed by a time of conscious idealising, of joyless grandeur. In Venice the tasks of plastic art had never been taken so seriously. The pronounced predilection for rich, decorative effects had determined the character of quattrocento sculpture,



and it also softened the seriousness of late renaissance sculpture. That this should be so, was helped by the appearance at the threshold of the new era of so pliable an artist's nature, as *Jacopo Sansovino*. If one bears in mind the nature of his Venetian sculptures, one can hardly understand, that their creator



Fig. 68. Tomb of the Doge Andrea Vendramin at S. Giovanni e Paolo.

had grown up in intimate intercourse with Andrea Sansovino, and had afterwards received his deepest impressions from Michelangelo. Those two verily aimed at something else. In all that is extrinsic, it must be admitted, Jacopo's figures recall sometimes Andrea's general beauty, and sometimes Michelangelo's violent poses. So much at least can be said for them all, that they are free from gross exaggerations, at a time, when in Italy sculpture in particular became perceptibly more mannered. Furthermore, with but few exceptions, they are very happily spaced in the architectural surroundings, for which they are intended. In this respect Jacopo Sansovino benefited by his extensive artistic culture both as architect and sculptor.

Generally the visitor makes his first acquaintance with Jacopo Sansovino, the sculptor, through the two *giants* which have given the name to the staircase of the *Doges' Palace*. The impression is not the most favorable. Mars and Neptune personify, in the sense of the antique culture of that period, the power of the Republic on land and at sea. The best that can be said of them is, that their proportions correspond happily with the staircase and with the arcades behind them. For the rest they are as insignificant in their attitude, as in the forms of their bodies. The aged Neptune with his beard blown back by the wind is not even dignified.

In the sculptured decoration of the *Loggetta di San Marco*



Fig. 69. Alessandro Leopardi.  
Pedestal of a Flagstaff in the Piazza.

Sansovino appeared in a far more favourable light. The four statues looked splendid in their niches.\* The Apollo is excellent as regards the flow of lines, although his beauty is very impersonal. The attitude of the raised left shoulder is completely justified by the pose, and is by no means a faulty design. The serious Goddess of Peace, who lowers her torch, is distinguished by beautifully



Fig. 70. From Verrocchio's Colleoni Monument.

treated drapery and clearly recalls in her attitude some models by Michelangelo (fig. 72 and 73). The marble high-reliefs of the attic are, it is true, lacking in deeper, intrinsic value, but were most effective in their position. In his large *tomb* of the Doge *Francesco Venier* (d. 1556) at *S. Salvatore* Sansovino

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\* These statues have been badly injured by the fall of the Campanile, but all the fragments have been carefully preserved for re-casting.



did not nearly attain to the graceful beauty of the early renaissance tombs. The composition is an unattractive façade, richly articulated with precious, coloured marble. The effigy of the recumbent Doge is dignified, but without clear characterization; the best figure is the beautiful "Hope" in the right hand



Fig. 71. Colleoni Monument.

niche. *S<sup>t</sup> Mark's* contains a number of Sansovino's best works in bronze. He probably bestowed the greatest care on the door which leads from behind the choir into the sacristy. The heads projecting from the corners are supposed to be portraits of Sansovino himself, of Titian and of Aretino. The figures of the prophets in the framing portion are excellent; but the reliefs of the Entombment and the Resurrection in the centre are less successful, overcrowded

and restless. The same applies to the six *reliefs* from the history of S<sup>t</sup> Mark on the side *screens of the choir*. The *statuettes of the four Evangelists* before the high altar are in their attitudes distinctly reminiscent of Michelangelo.

When Sansovino breathed his last, renaissance art had already entered upon its last phase of developement, which reaches its zenith in the baroque.



Fig. 72. Jacopo Sansovino. Apollo.



Fig. 73. Jacopo Sansovino. The Genius of Peace.

Never had the artists been as self-satisfied, as at that time. After they could look back upon a Michelangelo, they thought that art had no more tasks for them, which could not be solved playfully. Quiet beauty satisfied them no longer; they tried to achieve ever stronger effects by exaggerated movement, by enormous developement of the muscles and by gigantic proportions. In doing so, they despised careful, well considered work as unnecessary, and perhaps even inartistic hair-splitting. The master should also reveal himself

in rapidity of production. One's head swims, if one hears of the enormous quantity of stuff, painted or chiselled during the few decades of a human life by some such esteemed Italian artist of the seventeenth century. Rarely, too, have princes and wealthy private people sacrificed such sums for art purposes, as at that time. However, the quantity and ease of production were reduced in value by the general superficiality of the work. Architecture did not run quite the same risk, as sculpture and painting, where the artist's personality can and should express itself to an infinitely higher degree. It is just the lack of personality that we now so sadly miss in the otherwise often brilliant productions of baroque art. Michelangelo alone sufficed, to provide whole generations of sculptors after him with as much soul and passion, as they required.

Thus already Sansovino's Venetian successors — Danese Cattaneo, Alessandro Vittoria, Girolamo Campagna, Tommaso Lombardo, and whatever their names may have been — appear to us again as a group, similar to the mediaeval artists' families, although we know their names and works. The one among them, who has worked most in Venice, was *Alessandro Vittoria* of Trient (1525—1608). He is very clever in his way — altogether his contemporaries and successors rarely sink below a level of artistry, that is not worthy of recognition — but sometimes his effects — again like those of many others — are nothing short of disagreeable in their entirely senseless movement. (Vide the *Baptist* over the *holy water basin* at *S. Francesco della Vigna*.) He shows partiality for presenting a muscular old man with flowing beard (statue of St. Jerome at the Frari, St. Anthony on the altar at *S. Francesco della Vigna*), whose features have been held to be those of the aged Titian (fig. 74). Of his single figures the most pleasing is the Zacharia above the porch of the church of that name, a dignified, restrained, draped statue. Vittoria's por-



Fig. 74. Alessandro Vittoria.  
St Jerome at S. Maria dei Frari.



trait busts have received special praise; one of the best, his *portrait of himself*, adorns his tomb at *S. Zaccaria*. The most valuable of his other busts have found their way abroad. These busts are certainly cleverly and effectively arranged. — However, does not this very praise contain a reproach? — An artist, who is wrapt lovingly in his work, has his eye on something better than “effective arrangement”.



Fig. 75. G. Campagna. Group on the high altar of S. Giorgio Maggiore.

Among Sansovino's successors *Girolamo Campagna*, a pupil of *Danese Cattaneo*, has probably most individual life. His marble relief above the high altar of *S. Giuliano*, a dead Christ supported by two angels, is beautiful and noble, notwithstanding certain superficialities. His famous chief work, the bronze-group above the high altar of *San Giorgio Maggiore*, represents God the Father standing on a globe which is borne by the four Evangelists. With all the brilliancy of its execution, there is something repulsive to our feeling in this group and in the very idea it expresses (fig. 75). A good portrait figure of

Campagna's early period is that of the Doge *Leonardo Loredan* (d. 1572) at *S. Giovanni e Paolo*. Better still, and more mature, is the statue of the Doge *Vicogna* at the *Gesuiti*.

*Tommaso Lombardo's* signature confesses him to be the master of a rather vexatious *Madonna group* at *San Sebastiano* (fig. 77). But why mention further names? Figural sculpture has sunk lower and lower in Venice with the school of Sansovino, never to rise again from the depth. For the tombs of the Doges a vainglorious wall-architecture came finally in use, the sculptures being provided by very indifferent artists. We have already mentioned with the works of Longhena a particularly fantastic monument of this kind: the *Monumento Pesaro* at the *Frari* (fig. 76). In the other church of the Doges, at *S. Giovanni e Paolo*, is a tomb, if possible of still larger dimensions, on which are seated the Doges Bertuccio and Silvestro *Valier* and the Dogressa Elisabetta, holding a stately conversation.

Decorative sculpture on a smaller scale, on candelabra and such like works, remains pleasing for a long time yet. The two bronze *wells* in the court of the *Doges' Palace* justly enjoy great fame. The more richly decorated of the two is the one on the North side (by *Niccolò de' Conti*, 1556) (fig. 78), the better articulated-one on the South side (by *Alfonso Alberghetti*, 1559). The finest of the marble well-kerbs of the renaissance (somewhat early in date) adorns the *Campo San Giovanni e Paolo* (fig. 2). Of the candelabra the most famous is probably the one by *Andrea Bresciano* to the left of the high altar of the *Salute* (1570) (fig. 79). A little later in date (1598) are the two splendid candelabra at San Giorgio Maggiore by *Niccoletto Roccatagliata* (fig. 80). Every traveller will easily discover further examples in the churches of Venice. As late as the middle of the eighteenth century originated as charming an example of bronze-casting, as the *gates of the Loggetta* (by *Antonio Gai*), which have fortunately not suffered much damage by the fall of the Campanile (fig. 81). Thus the survey of Venetian sculpture returns to the sphere from which it had proceeded — to decoration.

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Fig. 76. Longhena and Melchior Barthel. Monumento Pesaro at the Frari.

## PAINTING.

AMONG all the arts, by which Venice is beautified, painting has achieved the highest aims. Architecture lacked the necessary space for solving its noblest problems. For serious and lofty sculpture there was no lack of space, but certainly of understanding on the part of the Venetians. Here, where above all the gay adornment of life was demanded of the arts, sculpture fell again and again under the sway of decoration. Only the art of painting was allowed an unhindered development in accordance with its very own laws. More than that, it has developed here more healthily and undisturbed than anywhere else in Italy. It benefited by the very condition which had interfered with the architecture of Venice—the want of a deeper enthusiasm for antiquity. That exuberant worship of antique art, which for a long time had taken



hold of the most influential apostles of culture in all other parts of Italy, brought in its train a one-sided over-estimation of the purely formal beauty of proportion and line. Colour was neglected. The whole history of Central Italian painting until it reached its zenith with Lionardo, Raphael and Michelangelo, bears witness to this. The Venetian painters remained more unbiassed. They grew up under the impression of the decoration in rich colours of their churches and palaces; more than that, the very atmosphere by which they were surrounded exercised perhaps a refining influence on their sense of colour. The famous "golden tone" of the colouring is by no means the exclusive prerogative of Titian: it appears over and over again in the works of the great Venetian masters, from Giambellini to Antonio Canale. And that this golden tone is a reflection of the golden, misty, and withal pure air of Venice, has surely been felt by many a one, who has been steered across the lagoon on a fine summer day.

We may wonder why Venetian painting did not flourish at a much earlier period under such favourable conditions. For it is a fact, that its first leading masters appeared a good deal later — not before the fifteenth century — than in sculpture. But if we remember once more the close relations to the Orient and to Byzantium, which were decisive for the mediaeval culture and art of Venice, we shall understand that the stiff examples of laborious mosaic painting and of Byzantine saints weighed heavily upon the free developement of young talent. Thus it can be explained, that even the presence of Giotto in the neighbouring town of Padua, where he was occupied for some time with one of his greatest works (from 1303), had no effect on Venetian painting — if we except the solitary mosaic of the Crucifixion in the background of the tomb of the Doge Morosini at S. Giovanni



Fig. 77. Tommaso Lombardi.  
Madonna at San Sebastian.

e Paolo, which, it must be admitted, shows traces of the Giottesque style. The pictures of *Jacobello del Fiore*, of *Fra Antonio da Negroponte*, or of *Semitecolo* at the *Academy*, at the *Museo Correr* and at *S. Francesco della Vigna* are as yet entirely under the fetters of Byzantine tradition and suffer equally from stiff lifelessness of the faces and overloading with figures and ornament. The Signory had two enormous canvases painted with the picture of the lion of S<sup>t</sup> Mark by *Jacobello* and by *Donato Veneziano*, a kindred spirit. The illshaped creatures are now at the archaeological museum in the Doges' Palace. But where a great task of monumental painting was concerned, they



Fig. 78. Niccolò dei Conti. Well in the Court of the Ducal Palace.

preferred after all not to depend on home talent. For the decoration of the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the Doges' Palace the Umbrian *Gentile da Fabriano* and the Veronese *Vittore Pisano* were summoned to Venice. Unfortunately a few decades later their wall-paintings were already badly injured.

With their names, however, is connected the liberating development of Venetian painting in the near future. Of the father of the famous brothers *Bellini*, *Jacopo*, we know, that his relations to Gentile da Fabriano were those of a pupil to his master. Similar statements are not clearly made about the eldest masters of the Murano School, but their paintings suggest such a theory.

The names of *Giovanni* and *Antonio di Murano* are attached to a series of paintings in the churches and in the gallery of Venice, which betray on the one hand in the predilection for rich plastic and gilded decoration their dependence on the ancient Byzantine-Venetian tradition, but on the other hand in the mellower colouring and in the loveliness of the female figures point towards the Umbrian School of Gentile da Fabriano. The earliest date on a painting by these two masters—1440—is inscribed on the panel of the Coronation of the Virgin in the *Academy* (fig. 82). Their principal work, which is preserved in the same collection, dates



Fig. 79. Andrea Bresciano.  
Candelabrum Sta. Maria della Salute.



Fig. 80. Niccolotto Roccatagliata.  
Candelabrum in the choir of S. Giorgio maggiore.



back to 1446. It shows the Mother of Christ, with the Infant in her lap, seated on a richly carved throne in a splendid Venetian garden-court and surrounded by the four fathers of the church. One of the painters betrays on this picture his German descent, by calling himself *Johannes Alamanus*. Among the number of their other works, the three polyptychs on the altar of the Cappella San Tarasio in *San Zaccaria* (with splendid, richly carved frames), and the Coronation of the Virgin in *S. Pantaleone*, deserve attention. Antonio throughout seems to have felt the need of sharing his work with an assistant, for, after Giovanni d'Allemagna had ceased to be his collaborator (about 1450),

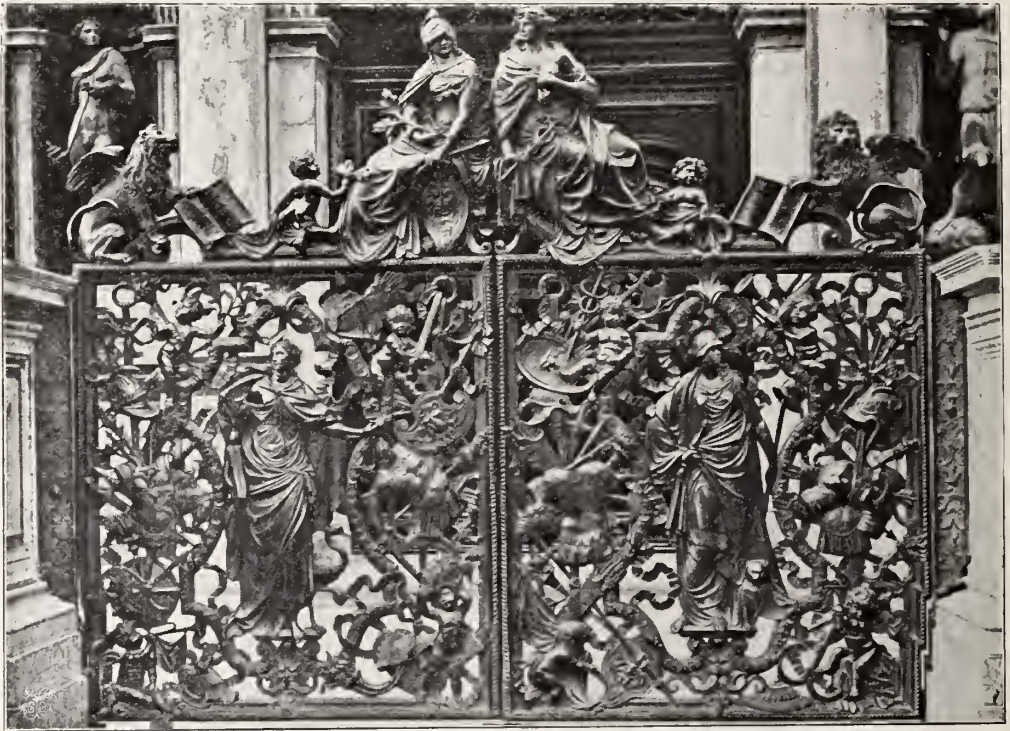


Fig. 81. Antonio Gai. Gates of the Loggetta.

he joined his younger brother Bartolommeo. We can quite understand this endeavour, if we remember the rather feeble and unpleasing picture which, according to the inscription, was finished by Antonio alone in his later years—the altar of St Anthony in the gallery of the Lateran in Rome.

Antonio's younger brother *Bartolommeo*, who sometimes describes himself by his patronymic *Vivarini*, must be mentioned as the first self-centred personality in the long succession of Venetian painters. We see in him a marked character, more perhaps even than a talent. Manliness is the ruling trait in his artistic physiognomy. He depicts serious men with wide foreheads, strong, rounded chins and muscular hands. They are no longer the lifeless dolls of

primitive Venetian painting, but yet phlegmatic, ponderous shapes. At times Bartolommeo knows how to rise to grand dignity — as in the altar of S<sup>t</sup> Mark at the Frari (1474) — but he never is graceful and lovable. He draws with great precision and models his figures so assiduously in all parts, that they sometimes appear to be carved in wood. The example of the Paduan School



Fig. 82. Antonio Vivarini and Johannes Alemannus. Coronation of the Virgin. 1440.

has unmistakably been decisive for his conception. Of course, he never was the great Mantegna's equal in feeling and in creative power, nor even in taste for colour. For the technical developement of Venetian painting Bartolommeo Vivarini was important in so far, as that he was one of the first to renounce the ancient practice of tempera painting, in order to turn towards oil-painting. The impulsion originated from *Antonello da Messina*, a traveller in many parts, who communicated to the Venetians the experiences he had collected since 1473



in the Netherlands. From the very next year Bartolommeo Vivarini made use of the new medium, clumsily of course as yet, in the manner of tempera painting.—The earliest of his larger pictures, the altar-piece of 1464 at the *Academy*, which in the centre panel shows the Virgin with the slumbering Infant in her lap, is at the height of Bartolommeo's capacity (fig. 83). His maturest and best work in Venice, by the side of the above-mentioned altar of St Mark at the *Frari*, is probably the now mutilated altar of St Augustine in S. Giovanni e Paolo. Less happy, weaker and almost mannered is the



Fig. 83. Bartolommeo Vivarini. Altar-piece in the Academy. 1464.

Madonna triptych of 1472 on the altar at the *Frari*. Further works from his brush will be frequently encountered in Venice and in the galleries of Upper Italy. The later ones among them betray to a marked degree the collaboration of pupils.

Among the followers of the brothers Antonio and Bartolommeo Vivarini, *Carlo Crivelli* deserves very particular attention. Unfortunately this most remarkable artist is represented in Venice by two pictures only (St. Jerome and St. Gregory, and St. Roch with three other Saints, at the *Academy*). The seriousness of the old Venetian painters is in him increased to obstinate hardness.



Sometimes he is sharp, like hammered steel, grim in the expression of the passions, and at the same time his Madonnas have an air of exaggerated elegance. But he always moves the beholder by his deep seriousness, and pleases him by the incredible perfection of his tempera painting with its profuse and often plastic, golden ornaments. There are no masters in old Italian



Fig. 84. Alvise Vivarini. St John the Baptist. Academy.

art, whose works have come to us throughout in as perfect and fresh a condition, as his.

*Antonello da Messina*, who spent the last twenty years of his life in Venice, can be best considered in the frame of Venetian art. For it was here, that he found, in the course of his migratory life, his nearest relations in spirit, with whom he exchanged many a stimulating thought. Next to technical

carefulness in oil-painting, he is characterized by a certain hardness of delineation. His ideal figures (*Ecce Homo* and the *Virgin of the Ascension* at the *Academy*) are far less pleasing than his portraits, of which the *Giovanelli* collection possesses a good example (a young man in a red coat). Antonello was lacking in lively imagination; but on the other hand he could hardly satisfy himself in unpretending imitation of nature.

The results of the stimulating influence of the foreign painters Pisanello Gentile da Fabriano, and later Antonello, upon the Venetian artists, were not confined to the school of Murano. Only a little later the artists' family of the



Fig. 85. Alvise Vivarini. Madonna. Sacristy of the Redentore.

Bellini rose to steadily growing importance. The competition had become so dangerous to the Muranese, that Bartolommeo Vivarini had finally to give it up. He died unnoticed. On the other hand a younger member of his family, Alvise, took up the struggle once again with youthful vigour and, for some time, with fair chances of success.

*Alvise Vivarini* continued working with the inherited methods of his family. In every thing that is extrinsical his early pictures recall Bartolommeo's. But he knew how to invest the old forms with a new spirit. The very faculty which Bartolommeo Vivarini was lacking — that of individualizing his figures — was Alvise's particular forte. Look at his large *Madonna* of the year 1480,

at the *Academy*! Here we have before us the first "*santa conversazione*" of Venetian art. The Saints are not parading side by side in stiff dignity, they hold intercourse and converse with each other. Mary, though she be seated on her throne, dressed in a cloak of cloth-of-gold, still remains the humble handmaiden of the Lord. She seems to have addressed her speech to St Anthony, whose eyes are modestly directed towards her. Joachim, lifting his hat in salutation, offers a dove. And what splendid character figures are grouped together on the right! — the visionary St Francis and the severe, ascetic greybeard St Bonaventura. Alvise has a predilection for showing us slender, meagre men who, as a contrast to Bartolommeo's phlegm, are sometimes overflowing with nervous life. This applies particularly to the single figures of St Clara and of St John the Baptist who, with an animated gesture of his hand, seems to be preparing a sermon in the desert (fig. 84). The body of St Sebastian is certainly schematic and somewhat poorly modelled, but does not his mouth appear to breathe? — All these pictures are at the *Academy*. Alvise did not shrink from entering the lists with the celebrated pair of the Bellini brothers. In a letter to the Signory he begged urgently to be employed on the paintings for the hall of the Great Council, which were to replace the ruined pictures by Pisanello and Gentile da Fabriano. His request was granted. We should like to know how his pictures looked by the side of the Bellini's, but they have all perished in the fire of 1577. Against his will he has probably been influenced in some ways by his rival Giovanni Bellini. We feel inclined to think so, if we look at the calm, lovely Madonna in the sacristy of the *Redentore*, which is undoubtedly the most graceful work of Alvise's later years (fig. 85). (A faint echo of it is in the Madonna at *S. Giovanni in Bragora*, in which church there is also a Resurrection of Christ by Alvise, from the year 1498.) The last and at the same time one of the greatest works of the master is the St Ambrose altarpiece in the Cappella Milanese at the *Frari*, a dignified picture of sacred splendour. St Ambrose is seated in the midst of a festive assembly of Saints, on a throne in a wonderfully painted, pillared hall. As Alvise died during the execution, the panel was finished by his pupil *Basaiti*.

His feeling for individual life and his faculty of depicting marked characters entitle Alvise Vivarini to a high rank among the artists of his time. Yet the hardness of his technique makes him appear rather as the last representative of an older development of art, than as the forerunner of a new art. This roll has been acceded by Providence to the members of the Bellini family. The greatest among them, *Giovanni Bellini*, had, during the time of youth in his ninety years' life, witnessed the first manifestations of independence in Venetian painting, but could only look upon the bright sun of the late renaiss-



sance, when his days were already numbered. It is true, like Moses of yore, he could only feast his eyes on the promised land, without being able to set foot on it. But nevertheless, he, together with his brother, could claim for themselves the high fame of having conducted the race of Venetian artists to the threshold of the most glorious epoch. They were helped in it by the



Fig. 86. Gentile Bellini. Portrait of Mahomet II. Layard Gallery, Venice.

favour of outside conditions. Thus it happens, that we can find nearly all the germs of the future greatness of Venetian painting in the works of the two brothers Bellini.

We have in an earlier passage pointed out, that during the middle-ages the art of painting was strictly confined by the space which it was intended to decorate. The medium which it used for preference was the technique of fresco, the very technique which could never properly flourish in Venice — at least not until the later period of the Republic. Perhaps it was feared,

that the saline exhalations of the lagoon would spoil the colours on the plaster-wall. And that these fears were well founded, is proved by the fate of the wall-paintings in the hall of the Great Council at the Doges' Palace, and later of the frescoes by Titian and Giorgione on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, which faded already after a few decades. What Venice had thus to dispense with in fresco-painting, proved to be beneficial to the painting of easel-pictures. The painters of Venice, who could only devote themselves to this branch, spent far more care upon the technique of easel-painting, than, say the Florentines, whose highest task always remained fresco-painting. The best-preserved, old tempera pictures of Italy are Venetian, and it is not mere chance, that the technique of oil-painting was practiced first in Venice, before all other towns of Italy. It is clear, that such fostering of the easel-picture was bound to be the best basis for the liberation of the picture from the surrounding setting.

And in yet another direction Venice became important for the development of modern painting in Italy: in the expansion of subject-matter. If already in the middle-ages all higher manifestations of art had been in the service of the Church, even as late as during the renaissance period the Church claimed for itself the best efforts of painting. Only in Venice the idea of secular government was so active and strong, that the State could rival the Church in her capacity as promotor of culture. Nowhere, as much as here, had the arts to glorify the power of the State, together with the sanctity of Heaven. Thus the artists were confronted with totally different tasks. The paintings at the Doges' Palace were to illustrate the history of the Republic just as the church-paintings illustrated biblical and legendary history. Unfortunately these older paintings of the Doges' Palace have not come down to us, but we may consider as a compensation for their loss the pictures with which the confraternities, or *scuole*, as they were called in Venice, had the halls of their meeting-houses decorated. Of course, there was no question here of glorifying political or war-like deeds; nevertheless the results were, on the surface, pictures of very similar character, for the Venetians loved to see the adventures of their patron-saints pictorially described in the garb of their time. The spectacles, in which they rejoiced most, were the splendid pageants which passed across the Piazza on church-festivals or on days of honour of the Republic. In long procession was unfolded all the splendour of silken robes of state, to which the wondrous buildings of the church of St Mark and of the Doges' Palace supplied the most beautiful setting. Wherever it was possible, such spectacles were interwoven with the description of the legend, whether it concerned the finding or the procession of the splinter of the holy cross, or the adventures of St. Ursula or of St George. It is obvious, that such a manner of representation was not far removed from genre-painting.

This delight of the Venetians in their own time was also reflected upon their religious painting. The Saints were looked for and painted on the soil of Venice: St Sebastian as a blooming youth of the people, St Jerome as a robust, weatherbeaten, old seafarer, the Virgin as a happy and healthy young mother. How ever much a rigorous, religious view may object to such a spirit of worldliness, we confess to be sufficiently heretic, to see in this very spirit a salvation of art.

Gentile and Giovanni Bellini have been the leaders in the direction indicated above. One can hardly get to know their father *Jacopo* in Venice from the entirely ruined frescoes at *S. Zaccaria* (Capella San Tarasio) and from his Madonna at the *Academy*, but certainly from his sketch-books in London and



Fig. 87. Gentile Bellini, 1496. Procession with the relic of the Cross in the Piazza. Academy.

Paris, where he reveals himself as a very estimable master of his period, who was well versed in the rules of perspective and had studied antique sculpture, and even more the daily life of his surroundings. That in his early days he had been a pupil of Gentile da Fabriano, has already been mentioned. Later in his life he stood in intimate relations to Mantegna who became his son-in-law.

His loving interest in reality Jacopo left particularly to his elder son *Gentile* who may be considered the great initiator of Venetian genre-painting. To judge from the few works of the once highly renowned "knight" Gentile, which have come down to us, he must have felt most happy in depicting a portrait or a scene of Venetian life. He apparently felt uncomfortable with problems of an imaginative nature. His large figures of Saints, St Mark, St Jerome and St Francis (in the *Fabbrica of St Mark's*), are clumsy and heavy. Also in the tempera picture of the saintly Lorenzo Giustiniani at the *Academy* the two





Fig. 88. Giovanni Bellini. Madonna with Magdalen and Catherine (about 1490). Academy.

ideal figures of angels are the weakest part; on the other hand Gentile felt more at ease with the thin character head of the Saint. He was honoured with a commission to paint for the Turkish court at Constantinople some pictures which the redoubted Sultan Mahomet II. desired to have executed by an able, occidental painter. A precious fruit of this sojourn in the East is the portrait of the Sultan, which is now in *Lady Layard's gallery* (fig. 86). Gentile's maturest and most important works are, however, the paintings which he had to execute for the *Scuola San Giovanni Evangelista* (now at the *Academy*). They glorify the miracles of the relic of the cross, which was preserved at San Lorenzo. One of the pictures, the healing of Pietro di Lodovico, has fared so badly at the hands of the restorer, that it can scarcely any longer be enjoyed as a work of Gentile. The other two pictures, on the other hand, — the Procession on the Piazza and the miraculous finding of the splinter of the cross which had fallen into the canal — show us Gentile from his best side. In the procession the accessories already are of interest: the shape of the Piazza about 1500, and St Mark's in the glory of its old mosaics (fig. 87). But what deserves far more to be appreciated, is the delightful picture of Venetian public life, which is here unrolled before our eyes: the crowds of apathetic looking monks, the slender street-loungers in their tight, multicoloured costumes, the splendid ladies in the retinue of the Queen of Cyprus, the gondoliers and street-urchins and beggars.

The brothers Bellini completed each other, and that was perhaps the reason for the harmony in which they lived side by side without interfering with each other's concerns. Formerly the saying obtained, that Gentile had been more of a theorist, Giovanni more of a practician in his art. I must however confess to being unable to find a natural explanation for such descriptions. It seems to me rather, that Gentile, as the painter of reality, forms a certain contrast to Giovanni who has developed a high style of his art on ideal subjects. *Giovanni Bellini* reveals himself as a stylist in the earliest of his pictures already, that are known to us. But whilst he here devoted his attention principally to form which, after the example of the Paduans, he endeavoured to ennoble to severe purity, he developed towards the end of his life more and more clearly into a stylist of colour and of light. But he has never rendered homage to the one or the other principle exclusively, for his distinction lay in the happy harmony of his schemes. In each of his pictures he seems to have achieved just what he wanted. We never notice in his work that unevenness which stigmatizes many a great production of Teutonic art as the result of a high, unsatisfied aspiration. *Giovanni Bellini* cannot move us even with his greatest creations, but he gives us that refreshing pleasure which is disseminated by health in conjunction with beauty.



From his early period, when he endeavoured to emulate his great son-in-law Mantegna, we have in Venice the pictures of the Transfiguration of Christ, and the body of the Saviour supported by angels, at the *Museo Correr*; a much restored *Pietà* at the *Doges' Palace* (Sala dei tre Capi); and three Madonna pictures at the *Academy*, the most important of which shows the

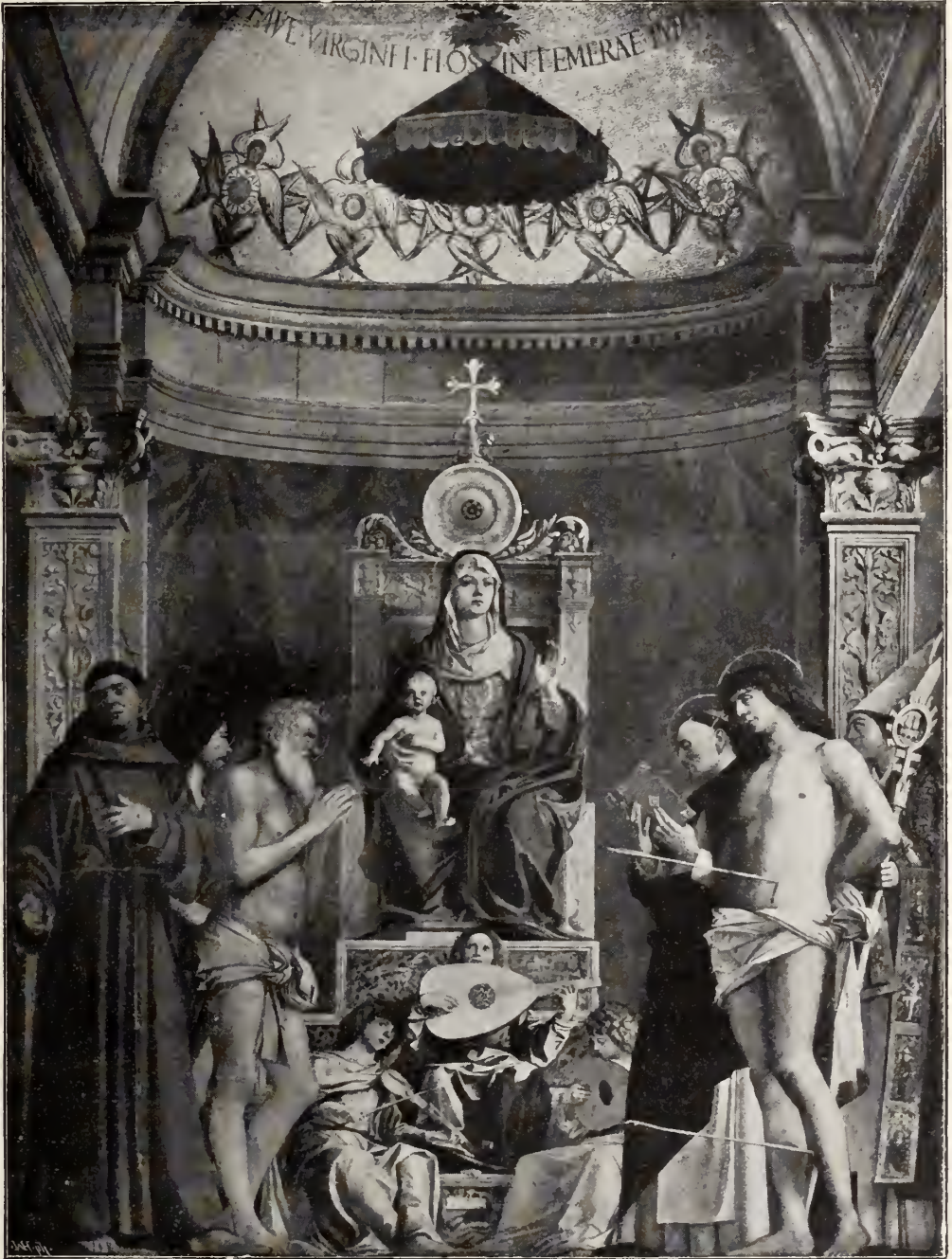


Fig. 89. Giovanni Bellini. Madonna Enthroned. Academy.



Holy Mother seated on a throne and adoring the Infant who is slumbering in her lap. The principal work of this period, a Madonna surrounded by Saints, was burnt at S. Giovanni e Paolo, together with one of Titian's finest paintings, in 1867. The example of Antonello da Messina, who settled in Venice about 1472, became most significant for Bellini's further development



Fig. 90. Giovanni Bellini. Madonna with Saints. San Zaccaria.

towards richer effects of colour and light. One of the first of Venetian oil-paintings, which combines deep colour with very effective, warm lighting, is probably Bellini's Madonna between S<sup>t</sup> Catharine and Magdalen (*Academy*) (fig. 88). Dating back probably to the same period is the splendid altarpiece which shows the Madonna solemnly enthroned in a niche, with six Saints at both sides (*Academy*). The music-making angels at the foot of the throne turn this "*santa conversazione*" into a sacred concert (fig. 89). Bellini had a distinct

leaning towards this pretty motif in his Madonna pictures, and was imitated therein by Dürer who came in touch with the aged master in Venice in 1506. The Madonna triptych on the altar of the sacristy at the *Frari* bears the date 1488. This beautiful picture has rightly received more admiration than any other of Giambellino's creations. Already its excellent preservation in the splendid carved frame contributes considerably to its effect. But then it is more particularly the simplicity of the arrangement, that intensifies the impression. In a narrow niche thrones the most beautiful of Madonnas, with the Infant Saviour in her lap; the panels at both sides show two pairs of serious Saints in quiet attitudes. The dignity of the general appearance, which is only tempered by the charming little angels with their musical instruments, has never been attained again by Bellini. In this very respect the Madonna at *S. Pietro in Murano* with the Doge Barbarigo in adoration compares unfavourably, how ever valuable it may otherwise be, particularly as regards the landscape background.

How Bellini changed his style in his mature age, is demonstrated by the altarpiece at *San Zaccaria* — the Virgin enthroned, between SS. Peter, Catharine, Lucia and Jerome (1505). Far less stress is here laid upon ideal beauty of form, than on a soft and deep effect of light. The whole canvas is bathed in the golden reflections of sunlight. For larger works the octagenarian master henceforth made use of the help of his pupils, as is revealed by the Madonna picture at *S. Francesco della Vigna* (much restored), and by the splendid altarpiece of S<sup>t</sup> Jerome at *San Giovanni e Crisostomo*. The last-named picture marks, by the way, a further and final advance in the direction of a free and entirely pictorial arrangement, although probably little more than the general disposition is due to Bellini. One would like to think, that at least the heads of the Saints are the work of the aged master's own hands. Wonderfully expressed is the dreamy longing in the eyes of S<sup>t</sup> Christopher, and the gentle melancholy in the features of S<sup>t</sup> Augustine. Bellini has, of course, sometimes repeated his motifs. The attitude of the Infant Christ on the picture at S. Francesco is identical with that on the Murano altarpiece. The *Academy* possesses two versions of a Madonna and Child in half figures, one of which — the less successful one — has the additional figures of S<sup>t</sup> Paul and S<sup>t</sup> George; the other, with the Virgin standing in front of a green curtain, is one of the most beautiful and dignified Madonnas ever painted by Bellini.

One can hardly get acquainted in Venice with Bellini as a portrait-painter, but certainly as a landscapist. In this, too, lies to a certain extent his historical importance for the succeeding generations. One need only see what delicate and charming landscape motifs he has introduced into the five allegorical pictures at the *Academy*! (The puzzling representations were probably full of



special meaning with reference to the destination of a piece of furniture which they most likely adorned.)

It seemed as though Venetian painting hastened as much as possible to make up for the time it had lost, in comparison with the other local schools

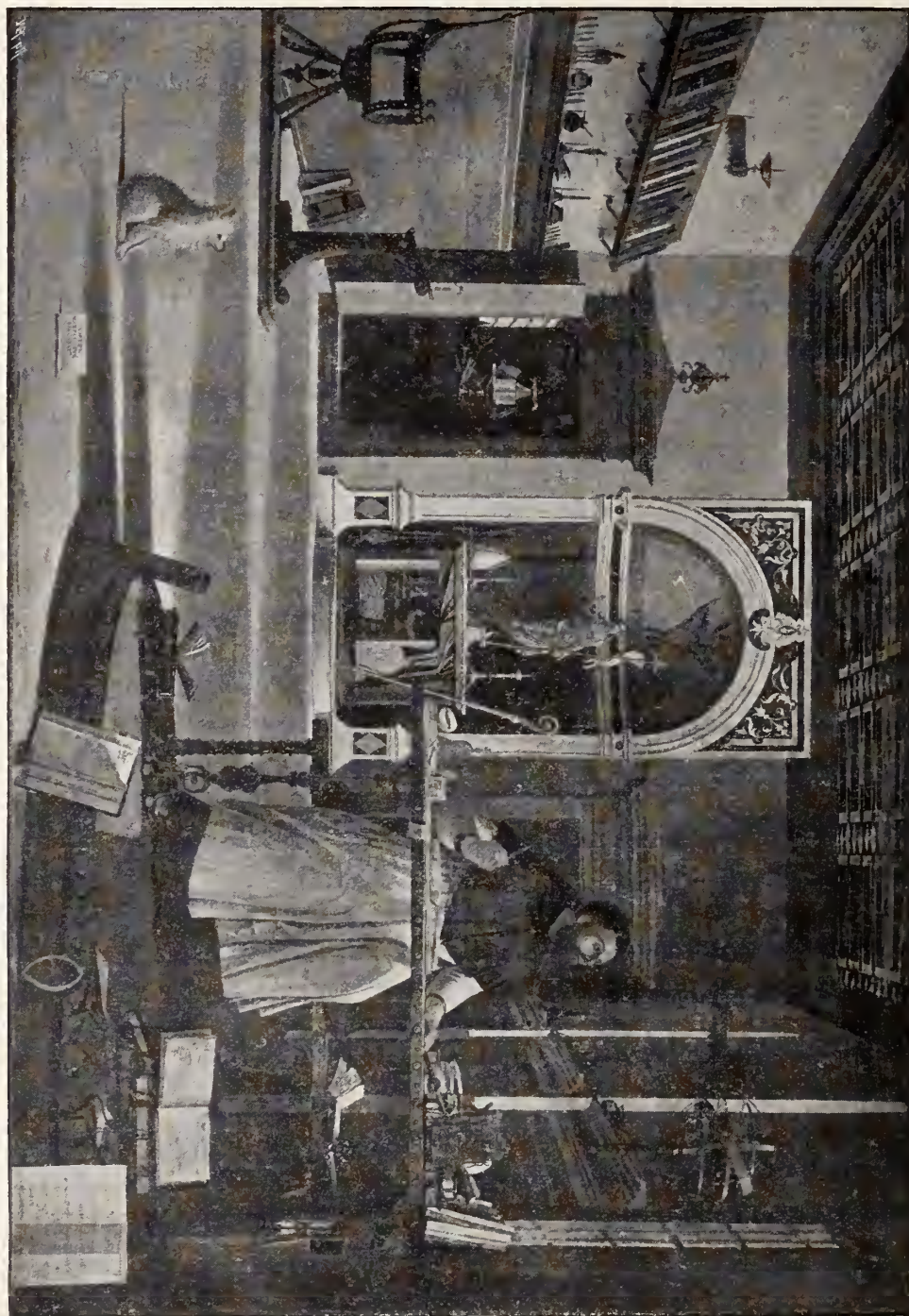


Fig. 91. Carpaccio. St. Jerome in his cell. Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni.



of Italy, at the beginning of its developement. Under the auspices of the last Vivarini and of the two Bellini a crowd of young artists pressed forward, among whom were, it is true, only a few talents of the first order, but a number of capable artists, sufficient by their united efforts to raise Venice in the last decades of the fifteenth century to the first rank among the centres



Fig. 92. Carpaccio. St Ursula's Dream. Academy.

of Italian painting. It is difficult to group these artists according to schools, for the influences clashed and crossed in every direction, and an artist who originally had to thank Alvise Vivarini for all he knew, expressly called himself later a pupil of Bellini.

The most important personality of the whole crowd is unquestionably *Vittore Carpaccio*. He was a delightful portrayer of the life of his time, and as such decidedly superior to his master Gentile Bellini. By birth he was most



Fig. 93. Carpaccio. The English Ambassadors' Return with the answer of king Maurnis. Academy.



likely a Southern Slav from Istria, but he has painted with the soul of a Venetian, and nobody has left us a better — I would say more honest — picture of the Venice of his period, than he. In a certain sense he thus plays a part in painting, which corresponds in sculpture to that of the Lombardi who had also emigrated to Venice.

Compared with Gentile Bellini, the general tone of Carpaccio's colour is lighter and warmer. He observes as keenly as his master, but he knows how to present his observation more naively with an admixture of perhaps un-



Fig. 94. St George. From the Picture in the Scuola di S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni.

conscious humour. Take for instance the little dog that watches St Jerome at his desk — how exceedingly droll its attitude! Sometimes this humour is accompanied by a fantastic imagination which is, if possible, still further removed from Gentile Bellini. With obvious enjoyment Carpaccio depicts the frightfulness of the dragon whom St George kills with such sureness of aim; he spares us nothing of the gruesomeness of the worm-eaten bones and putrifying corpses which have been gnawed by the monster (fig. 94). What fancy again is revealed by the backgrounds of Carpaccio's pictures! His architecture is no less Venetian than that of Gentile. But whilst the latter depicts plainly and straightforwardly the Piazza and the buildings on the Grand Canal, Carpaccio

Venice.



builds up the most beautiful halls and façades in the most genuine style of the Lombardi, halls that have, however, no existence, except on his canvas. With all this he is a painter of interiors, the like of whom has never seen again grown up in Venice. The sleeping-chamber of S<sup>t</sup> Ursula and the study of S<sup>t</sup> Jerome are filled

with a sense of comfort, with which we would not credit any Italian. The eye discovers a hundred trifles, in which the painter has taken a keen and loving interest, without losing sight of the homogeneous general effect.

Armed with such talents, Carpaccio appears to us predestined to become the master of agreeable, broad narration, and as such he was evidently appreciated already by his contemporaries who repeatedly entrusted to him the task of depicting for their *scuole* the legends of the Saints in serial form. Two of these series have remained in Venice preserved in their completeness: the nine pictures of the legend of S<sup>t</sup> Ursula — now at the *Academy* — and the ten pictures devoted to various Saints, in the *Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni*. From the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista, where Gentile Bellini and his school had been employed for preference, Car-



Fig. 95. Carpaccio. Presentation of Christ. Academy.

paccio's picture of the exorcism by the Patriarch of Grado has come down to us (at the *Academy*). The pictures of the legend of S<sup>t</sup> Ursula were the first to be taken in hand, and were, to judge from the dates upon them, completed during the years 1490 to 1495. The most excellent among them are, without much doubt, the dream of the Saint and the two scenes in which the English ambassadors are received and dismissed by King Maurus (fig. 93). Far less happy than in the

S<sup>t</sup> Ursula series was Carpaccio in the Miracle of the Cross of the Patriarch of Grado. On the other hand he reveals the whole versatility of his talent in the charming series of pictures at the Scuola degli Schiavoni. Do not shirk the trouble of carefully studying each of the pictures in the poor light of the low room. As a single figure the S<sup>t</sup> George fighting the Dragon is inimitable.



Fig. 96. Carpaccio. Two Courtesans. Museo Correr.

A not less successful picture of festive Venetian pageantry is presented by the Baptism of the Heathen King and Queen; an interesting night-landscape by the Prayer of Christ on the Mount of Olives; and we enjoy the most amiable descriptive humour in the pictures of S<sup>t</sup> Jerome writing and of the frightened Monks escaping. Of great objective interest as pictures of Venetian life are the two idle courtesans at the *Museo Correr*, who pass away their time in playing with their domestic animals (fig. 96).

Carpaccio kept as far away from passionate movement, as from idealistic pathos. That he yet could attain, when needed, to the noble gravity of the elevated, religious picture, is proved by his beautiful *Presentation in the Temple*

Fig. 97. Ascribed to Carpaccio. Christ at Emmaus. S. Salvatore.



at the *Academy* (fig. 95). The picture is deservedly one of the most popular of its kind in Venice, although it is only fair to admit, that its popularity is due as much to the thrumming boy-angels on the steps below the platform, as to the dignified, serious figures of the Virgin and S<sup>t</sup> Simeon. The altarpiece



of Christ at the table of the disciples at Emmaus, which has been ascribed to Carpaccio, is due to another artist's brush, perhaps to *Rocco Marconi's* (S. Salvatore) (fig. 97).

To the same circle as Carpaccio, but as artists of the third rank, belong *Lazzaro Sebastiani*, *Giovanni Mansueti* and *Benedetto Diana*. The pictures which they had to execute for the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista do not compare at all favourably with those of their collaborators Carpaccio or Gentile. *Sebastiani*, who favours a grey, cool tone, can be recognized by the excessively



Fig. 98. Benedetto Diana, Madonna with Saints. Academy.

slender proportions, not only of his figures, but also of his architecture (the Conferment of the Relic of the Cross and the Madonna and Child at the Academy); *Mansueti*, whose colouring is stronger and more variegated, bores the spectator by the clumsiness of his human figures with their stiff, coarse type of face. (Two Miracles of the Cross at the Academy; his best pictures are probably the organ doors with four Saints at San Giovanni Crisostomo.) *Benedetto Diana* would have to be placed far above these two, if the Madonna enthroned between S<sup>t</sup> Louis and S<sup>t</sup> Ann (*Academy*, cat. 86) were really his work. But the beautifully drawn picture with its tender, silvery tone is so different from the other works of Diana, one of which — a Madonna with four

Saints (at the *Academy*) bears his full name, that the attribution appears, to say the least, doubtful (fig. 98).—I may be permitted at this point to put in a kind word for the worthy *Marco Marziale*, who has probably been so badly spoken of, chiefly because he fits so ill into the frame of his Venetian surroundings. His was a coarse nature, which was simply incapable of idealistic representation. In his Madonna picture at the Lochis-Carrara gallery in Bergamo he tried rather clumsily to borrow something of Umbrian loveliness. On the other hand he was an industrious and clear-sighted observer of nature. If one examines his Christ at Emmaus, at the *Academy* (fig. 99), and his Circumcision of Christ, at the Conservatorio dei Penitenti at *San Giobbe*, for what they contain in the way of characteristic portraiture, one cannot but admit, that he deserves full esteem. Dürer's presence in Venice may most likely have helped to form his style, for we gladly believe, that he felt attracted towards the great Northern master, in whom he must have found a kindred spirit.

The most important of those who followed in the footsteps of Alvise Vivarini, was Giovanni Battista, called *Cima* of Conegliano (1460—1517). Cima achieved all, that could be achieved by fair talent and good sense of colour in conjunction with honest endeavour. The qualities which all his pictures have in common, are artistic seriousness, uniform carefulness in the work, a manly dignity of representation. Wherever we meet Cima, he is sympathetic, but falls short of stirring up enthusiasm. He brought with him from his native soil on the slopes of the Alps an ever-green freshness. In looking at his pictures, the background of which he loves to border with a blue Alpine chain, one could almost imagine to be breathing the cool air of the mountains. For, brilliant and deep though his colours may be—no other Venetian has surpassed him in this respect—, it would nevertheless be very wrong to speak of a glow of colour in Cima's work. His general tone is rather cold, than warm. Cima seems to have developed slowly. Only unwillingly he abandons the technique of tempera for that of oil-painting which he treats with metallic hardness. One of his favourite figures is S<sup>t</sup> John the Baptist whom he represents splendidly as a sun-burnt ascete with dense, black, curly hair and a dreamy, abstract gaze. Thus he stands, surrounded by four Saints, and looking heavenwards with the air of a prophet, in the principal picture of Cima's early period, the altarpiece at *Sta. Maria dell' Orto*, of 1489. Here the forms, and particularly the treatment of the draperies, are still of exaggerated, scrupulous sharpness. On the other hand Cima's art appears perfectly mature in the altar-picture of the Baptism of Christ at *San Giovanni in Bragora* (with rich landscape motifs), which is only a few years later in date. To the same period belong the *Pietà* at the *Academy* and the Adoration of the Infant Saviour at the *Curmine*. His most charming picture in Venice, in which he approaches

Carpaccio's graceful manner of narration, is the young Tobias who, chatting with the angel, carries home his large fish (*Academy*) (fig. 100). As representative altarpiece Thomas, the unbelieving, is the most beautiful. The three figures under a high marble arch in front of a distant alpine landscape are monumental in effect (fig. 101). The half figures of the Madonna between the Baptist and St Paul, and even more so the large Madonna enthroned and surrounded by six Saints, are imagined in the spirit of Giambellini. The two little music-making angels, a concession made by the serious Cima in the last named



Fig. 99. Marco Marziale. Christ at Emmaus. Academy.

picture, cannot, it is true, be compared either with Bellini's as regards loveliness, or with Carpaccio's as regards naive drollery (both pictures are at the *Academy*). The best and maturest work of Cima's brush has unfortunately been lost to Venice — the Madonna with the Baptist and Magdalen at the Louvre Gallery. We learn from it, that the aged master steadily continued his development in the direction of noble, buoyant life, so that he could finally venture on a successful step into the art of the late renaissance. —

*Marco Basaiti*, who had also received his training under Alvise Vivarini, was not the equal of his follow-pupil Cima in talent, and even less in character. We make his acquaintance first on Alvise's large altarpiece of St Ambrose at



the *Frari*, to which he has added — and not exactly very happily — the two figures in the foreground (SS. Sebastian and Jerome). All that he retained later of the severe drawing and modelling of Alvise's school, was a certain sharpness of outline; otherwise his modelling was much softer, sometimes almost weak. His treatment of the landscape is characteristic: he knows how to place his figures into the scenic setting, instead of drawing them up before a land-



Fig. 100. Cima da Conegliano. Tobias and the Angel. Academy.

scape background, in the manner of his fellow-workers. He understands excellently how to paint air and water, but the barrenness of the vegetation in his pictures is striking. Grass and shrubs are avoided as much as possible, and the trees generally have the look of dry brooms. Of his early period I must mention the small Madonna picture with the kneeling donor at the *Museo Correr* and the Dead Christ with Angels at the *Academy* (fig. 102). The same model which served him for the figure in the latter work, appears again in the beautiful face of the saintly bishop who in looking towards the spectator from

the left of the scene on the Mount of Olives (at the *Academy*) (fig. 103). It is therefore probable, that the picture dates from the same period. One of the last of those paintings by Basaiti, which still betray Alvise's influence, is probably the Calling of the Children of Zebedee, at the *Academy* (with beautiful landscape in evening light). Soon after, he turned towards the victorious direction of Giovanni Bellini. Witness Basaiti's large Ascension of the Virgin at *S. Pietro Martire* in *Murano*. His finest and maturest work, the authorship of which has been denied to him without reason, is the superb S<sup>t</sup> Sebastian in the Sacristy of the *Salute* (fig. 104). In his two late pictures at *S. Pietro di Castello* (the S<sup>t</sup> George and the Dragon and S<sup>t</sup> Peter enthroned) he approaches the manner of Carpaccio.

One cannot take leave of the school of Alvise Vivarini, without alluding to the two greatest artists that have proceeded from it, although the activity of both of them in Venice was only transitory and has left but few traces: *Bartolommeo Montagna* and *Lorenzo Lotto*. The former was still a serious son of the quattrocento, the latter one of the most variable among the great painters of the late renaissance. The dignified character of Montagna's art is revealed in the two paintings by his hand in the possession of the Venice *Academy*: the Christ between SS. Roch and Sebastian, and the Madonna enthroned between SS. Sebastian and Jerome (fig. 105). The last picture in particular clearly bears witness to the approach to Mantegna. The S<sup>t</sup> Sebastian is one of the few embodiments of this Saint in Venice, in which a noble expression of pain has been achieved. By its side S<sup>t</sup> Jerome appears most dignified, but of melancholy seriousness. If in Montagna the whole outward severity of the Vivarini is still preserved, Lotto appears as the master of colour and of a vivacity increased to nervousity. It is just in this last respect that he may at one time have felt related to his first teacher Alvise Vivarini. In his means of pictorial expression, it is true, he soon shook of the teaching of the Vivarini and proceeded with the whole freedom of the mature art of the late renaissance. His earliest picture in Venice — the S<sup>t</sup> Nicholas of Bari enthroned above clouds, with S<sup>t</sup> Lucia and S<sup>t</sup> John the Baptist — was painted by Lotto in 1529 at the zenith of his life. That this splendid piece of colouring with its beautiful landscape is so badly protected, on one of the side-altars of the *Carmine*, exposed to the greasy vapour and smoke of the candles, is truly lamentable. The altarpiece dedicated to S<sup>t</sup> Anthony, which Lotto executed in 1542 for *S. Giovanni e Paolo*, is overflowing with pulsating life (fig. 106). The amiable old Saint is enthroned on a raised seat and unfolds a petition; angels and cherubs are swarming round him and seem to recommend to him the poor people who wait below for the benefits he is about to bestow. Everything is strongly felt: the crowd who joyfully receive the alms or pressingly hand up the petitions, the two ecclesiastics



who receive the letters and distribute money, and the good Saint who benevolently considers everything.

Strangely enough we only find inferior talents among the older generation of the school of Giovanni Bellini. *Vincenzo Cutena* has never entirely lost the clumsiness in the rendering of forms, which disfigures his early pictures; the warm splendour of colour of his master turns in him into a general *blonde* key



Fig. 101. Cima da Conegliano. Thomas, the Unbelieving. Academy.

of washed-out tones. Among his early pictures are a Madonna at *S. Trovaso*, and the votive picture of Leonardo Loredan in the *Doges' Palace*. (St Mark commends the Doge to the Madonna enthroned, at whose left stands the Baptist.) One of his maturest works is the altarpiece of St Christina at *Sta Maria Mater Domini*. The *blonde* key of colour is also characteristic for *Bissolo* who, otherwise, possessed perhaps a more pronounced sense of beauty than Catena, but on the other hand was much weaker still in his modelling. His figures, with their flabby limbs and completely inexpressive, round faces, are rarely attractive and sometimes absolutely repulsive. At the *Academy* can be found several pictures from his brush: a Coronation of St Catherine, a Presentation in the Temple, and two Madonnas, the best of which is undoubtedly the Madonna with four Saints including Job in the right hand corner (fig. 107). If already Catena and Bissolo are sometimes mistaken for their master Giambellino, this is still more frequently the case with *Niccolò Rondinelli*. In his case such a mistake is the more pardonable, not only because in the pictures of his early period he resembled Bellini most among all the master's pupils, but also because he frequently signed Bellini's name on his own paintings — most probably with the consent of the much sought-for master who thus satisfied with studio-

of washed-out tones. Among his early pictures are a Madonna at *S. Trovaso*, and the votive picture of Leonardo Loredan in the *Doges' Palace*. (St Mark commends the Doge to the Madonna enthroned, at whose left stands the Baptist.) One of his maturest works is the altarpiece of St Christina at *Sta Maria Mater Domini*. The *blonde* key of colour is also characteristic for *Bissolo* who, otherwise, possessed perhaps a more pronounced sense of beauty than Catena, but on the other hand was much weaker still in his modelling. His figures, with their flabby limbs and completely inexpressive, round faces, are rarely attractive and sometimes absolutely repulsive. At the *Academy* can be found several pictures from his brush: a Coronation of St Catherine, a Pre-



works the excessive demands of his admirers. — The *Museo Correr* possesses two of his Madonnas, and the church of *San Flantino* near the Fenice a Holy Family, both pictures that generally pass as works by Giovanni Bellini.

By the side of such dependent successors of Bellini, *Andrea Previtali* appears at all events as a personality. Perhaps he has in recent times been a little overrated, for he does not by any means deserve a very high position. Without wishing on the whole to amuse ourselves with hunting for faults of drawing, we may be permitted to state, that with Previtali such faults are particularly frequent and disturbing. Apparently the cause of it is, that Previtali aimed at vivacious expression and movement, for the rendering of which he lacked the necessary gifts. In his later work he has learnt a few things from



Fig. 102. Basaiti. The Dead Saviour. Academy.

Lotto, especially some peculiarities of costume. The sacristy of *San Giobbe* contains a Marriage of S<sup>t</sup> Catherine from his brush, the sacristy of the *Redentore* and Crucifixion and a Birth of Christ.

Giovanni Bellini had long been advanced in years, when three young artists of the same age were working in his studio, artists destined in the future to spread the fame of Venetian painting over the whole civilized world: *Giorgione*, *Palma* and *Titian*. For their fatherland their names signify the zenith of the renaissance. The leader among them, whose personality determined the particular character of Venetian painting for a whole generation, was Giorgione. He achieved his high aim in an entirely different way from that of the Florentine painters. If Fra Bartolommeo and Raphael complied with the laws of artistic beauty, which had been approved as right by their time, *Giorgione's* sole endeavour was, to express in his pictures his innermost ego, without taking into

account any other law. Florentine and Roman painting solved the highest problems of an art tied to the decoration of a given space; Giorgione finally delivered the picture from the surrounding space. Which deed has been of greater historical importance, cannot easily be decided.

Giorgione's life was short — restricted to the space of thirty-two years (1478—1510). There are but few pictures that have been acknowledged by



Fig. 103. Basaiti. Christ in the Garden. Academy.

eagerly searching criticism as his unquestionable property. But these few enable us completely to understand the spell which Giorgione exercised over his contemporaries. It was, to express it in a word, the spell of youth — not youth, that boldly rushes into the world to conquer it, but youth, that ponders in blissful oblivion of the world on a dream of beauty and happiness, in which it firmly believes. Whatever Giorgione has painted, his large Madonna, his rustic

fête, his sleeping Venus, his Ordeal by Fire of the Child Moses, — everything stands before us like the vision of a dream. We forget to ask, why these human beings are naked or clothed, why they speak or keep silence; we only feel in our heart the longing for a country, where everything is so wonderful, and yet so harmonious and beautiful. We would fain believe Vasari, when he tells us, that Giorgione had been such an excellent singer and lute player. He who has painted thus, must have loved music.

Giorgione's most famous picture, the Madonna enthroned between SS. Liberale and Francis is still in the church of his native town Castelfranco, for which it was painted; most of his other works are widely dispersed, and Venice herself has only retained two or three. But one of these is so peculiar and reveals so much of its master's nature, that it may well indemnify us for the loss of many another picture. It is the so-called family of Giorgione at the *Palazzo Giovanelli*. On the bank of a streamlet is seated on soft lawn a young woman who seems to have just finished her bath. On the other bank of the stream, leaning on his staff, bare-headed and with an open doublet, stands a young knight guarding the mother against intrusion. Profound peace rules over the scene which is enclosed by crumbling ruins and dense shrubbery. And yet the place is not detached from the world. Houses and Castles can be seen in the



Fig. 104. Basaiti. St Sebastian.  
S. Maria della Salute. Sacristy.

distance. And the peace is threatened by dense masses of clouds which rise on the sky and from which lightning flashes down. A few years ago the scene of this picture has been explained with a high degree of probability to represent an illustration to the *Thebaid* by Statius. King Adrastus encounters Queen Hypsipile as nurse in the service of the ruler of Nemea. Whether this interesting reading has contributed towards the esthetic appreciation of the



work of art, I shall leave undecided. The picture has always been admired, even when the subject was veiled in mystery. For that, which needs no explanation, because it is immediately intelligible, is the mood — that of tender, dreamy melancholy which is not only embodied in the attitude and expression of the figures, but quite as much in the landscape, the green wilderness with the broken marble columns and the rising thunderstorm (fig. 108).



Fig. 105. Montagna. Madonna between SS. Sebastian and Jerome. Academy.

This very trait is peculiar to Giorgione: that he represents his human beings in unison with nature, and that he knows equally well how to give soul to the figures and to the Landscape. In his picture of Christ bearing the Cross (at *San Rocco*) the contrast between the bright light on the chief figure and the darkness of the background, is quite as effective, as in the few half figures the contrast between the sublime calmness of the Redeemer and the brutality of his

tormentors. That Giorgione dispensed with an intense expression of pain, is characteristic for his turn of mind. If this picture already it badly injured, this applies even in a higher degree to the Pursuit of Daphne by Apollo in the collection of the *Seminario Patriarcale* (fig. 109). The comprehension of the story is here again made difficult by the threefold representation — as it appears to be — of the arrow-shooting god in the foreground and middle-distance. In



Fig. 106. Lorenzo Lotto. St Antony. S. Giovanni e Paolo.

spite of the profuse restoration, one can still admire the grace and ease of the representation. To judge from the picture which we gather of Giorgione's artistic character from such works of his, as have come down to us, it is not probable, that his vocation lay in the direction of wall decoration. His dreamy fantasy was here out of place, and perhaps we need not mourn over the loss of his frescoes on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi as much, as over that of many

an easel-picture. (Vasari was particularly struck by the unintelligibility of these frescoes.)

The great success which Giorgione had in Venice, compelled the painters of his time to emulate him, if they would reap applause. Even the aged Giovanni Bellini could not resist the charm, as is proved by his altarpiece of St Jerome at San Giovanni e Crisostomo. Even as differently disposed a nature as *Giacomo Palma* because Giorgionesque, and that to such a degree, that for centuries his pictures have been confused with those of his model. And yet, what a fundamental difference between the two! If Giorgione's ideals were



Fig. 107. Bissolo. Madonna and Saints. Academy.

centred in a wonderland of harmony, Palma could grasp his with his hands. Palma's style had its roots in the soil of Venice. What inspired him was the beauty of the daughters of his town, with their blooming bodies, with hair in which the gold of the sun was held prisoner, and with the rustling splendour of their silken robes. If Palma painted the nude, his brush was not led so much by his pleasure in the beautiful construction of the human body, as by his delight in the shimmering surface of the skin. Little is known of Palma's life; he must be known by his works. And even this is made difficult in Venice, for, as in the case of Giorgione, most of his works must be searched for outside the town, far away in the wide world. The *Academy* in Venice has preserved at least three undoubtedly genuine pictures from his brush: besides two paintings of smaller



size (Christ and the Adulteress, and the Ascension of the Virgin) the splendid altarpiece of S<sup>t</sup> Peter from the church at Fontanelle. The arrangement alone of the group is already exceedingly imposing, in the three chief figures of the Baptist, S<sup>t</sup> Peter and S<sup>t</sup> Paul, an impression which is greatly intensified by the splendid, broad treatment of the drapery and by the deep, glowing colour.



Fig. 108. Giorgione. Adrastus and Hypsipile. Palazzo Giovanelli.

Palma has never again created a group-picture of such powerful effect. Yet his popularity in Venice is based not so much on this painting, as on the altarpiece of S<sup>t</sup> Barbara at *S<sup>ta</sup> Maria Formosa*. The beautiful Saint who stands in the centre of the altarpiece, too narrowly confined by the frame, may pass for a symbol of Venice, for it is the most dignified personification of the ideal of womanhood at the time of the greatest glory of Venice. The slightly reclining

attitude of the torso gives the figure something imposing, an impression which is intensified by the broad cast of the red drapery which flows around her body. A healthy sensuality speaks from her face. The hands are remarkably graceful. (The only fault of the beautiful picture, that has always disturbed the writer of these lines, is the striking twist in the curve of the crown which ought to form so important a framing for the forehead.) Very unjustly the S<sup>t</sup> Barbara has frequently been praised at the expence of the remaining parts of the altarpiece, as though the latter were hardly worth looking at. The Pietà above the central panel is, however, a work of touching beauty, the S<sup>t</sup> Antony most dignified, and the S<sup>t</sup> Sebastian one of the finest figures of a youth, that can be seen anywhere (fig. 110 and 111).



Fig. 109. Giorgione. Apollo and Daphne. Seminario Patriarcale.

The mysterious charm of Giorgione and the great popularity of Palma gradually faded in the eyes of their contemporaries — and of posterity — before the brilliancy of their companion *Titian*. His name signifies, according to popular estimation, the highest achievement of Venetian art. His star really only arose after the death of Giorgione. Since then Titian developed slowly, but with the strength of a thoroughly healthy, harmoniously gifted nature, towards ever more exalted tasks. Age could not affect his delightful gifts, nay, it presented him, like many another great man, with yet a new faculty: with the effortless command over all the technical means of his art. The paintings, which he has created at his most advanced age, are the most valuable and instructive in their pictorial qualities. Titian is remarkable as a man. If he had died when working at his *Assunta*, what fables would have gained currency about the high-flown idealism of his character! But during the century of his life he has so frequently come into touch with the historical personages



of his period and has played such a part in public life, that we gain a better insight into his character, than we do with most of the great artists of his time. And thus we see by no means a blameless artist's nature, living for its high vocation only, untouched by mean motives. Titian also knew how to strike a bargain, and the riches which he had thus acquired, he would enjoy to the full. His adviser in this, and his boon-companion, was Pietro Aretino. Titian did not disdain intimate intercourse with such a man, who, it

is true, was the wittiest writer of Italy, but who at the bottom of his heart was infamy personified. Nevertheless Titian did not lose himself in such company. The most precious part of his nature



Fig. 110. Palma Vecchio. St Barbara.



Fig. 111. Palma Vecchio. St Sebastian.

S. Maria Formosa.



remained ever pure and healthy. Titian's men and women, with all their wondrous beauty, are so real, that one feels inclined to believe, that the master has



Fig. 112. Titian. The Ascension of the Virgin. Academy.

only just depicted them exactly as they once bestrode the soil of Venice. This applies particularly to his most idealistic figures, like the Christ in the picture of the Tribute-money.

Titian's peculiar greatness consists in the fact, that he renders nature with apparent unpretentiousness, and yet possesses to the highest degree that "harmony which flows forth from the bosom and returns to the heart, embracing the whole world". Each of his human figures contains no less fantasy, than the tremendous men and women of Michelangelo. His gift of idealizing can be recognized first in his colour which is incomparably sunnier than that of any other Venetian painter, but his idealizing is by no means restricted to his colouring.

Venice still possesses Titian's earliest

and latest works, and, although many a picture has gone astray, she also retains some of the most beautiful works of his best period. From his early days — until about 1511 — when he was under the influence of



Fig. 113. Titian. St Mark, surrounded by other Saints. S. Maria della Salute. Sacristy.

Giorgione, we have, in the upper storey of the *Scuola di San Rocco*, the Christ as the Man of Sorrows; in the sacristy of the *Salute*, the S<sup>t</sup> Mark enthroned between four Saints (to the left SS. Cosmas and Damian, to the right SS. Roch and Sebastian) (fig. 113); at *S. Marcuola* the Infant Saviour between SS. Catherine and Andrew. The *Academy* guards as its greatest treasure the Ascension of the Virgin, known to the whole world simply as the Assunta. This picture, which Titian has painted (for the high altar of the Frari) in 1518, in his maturity, is nevertheless filled with the fire of youth. It is perhaps the noblest pictorial expression of exaltation that the world possesses. Everything is filled with rushing life. The tomb of the Virgin is empty. The disciples, who a moment before were mourning around it, see her, whom they had believed dead, ascend towards her heavenly kingdom. They crowd and press together, as though they were endeavouring to follow her with rapturous expressions and outstretched arms. She, however, lightly floats upwards, impelled by her own force, as though it could not be otherwise, and surrounded by swarms of the loveliest, dark-eyed little angels. All earthly suffering has left her; her countenance breathes the bliss of Paradise. Thus she looks up to the beloved Father, Who gently floats down towards her, with spread arms, to receive her. To see the picture in pure delight. It is doubly touching, because we see the indescribable presented with unheard-of truth to nature. An immense art is here hidden. The powerful bodies of the apostles, in their relation to the smaller, higher figures, make the space appear larger, than it actually is. Their compact mass is articulated more by colour and light, than by line. The bright circle of light around the Madonna, into which the figure of God the Father seems dipped, produces a most beautiful effect (fig. 112).

Not long after the completion of the Assunta, Titian began his work upon another large altarpiece which was destined for the chapel of the Pesaro family at the same church of the *Frari*. It was only placed in position after the lapse of seven years, in 1526. It marks again a culminating-point in Titian's life-work and in Venetian art. For with it was pronounced the final word in the representation of the religious ceremonial-picture. The kneeling members of the Pesaro family are conceived quite simply in the sense of the quattrocento. But above them is a beautifully composed group in the shape of a pyramid culminating with the heads of Mary and of the Infant Saviour in her lap. The manner in which the shafts of two lofty columns are arranged one behind the other above the figures, became a model for the later art of the eighteenth century. By this simple device the effect of space is very considerably heightened (fig. 114). Of Titian's portraiture, of which this magnificent altarpiece contains such fine examples, the most important achievements must be searched outside Venice. At the *Academy* we only find one of his portraits—that of the



wealthy Jacopo Soranzo, a thin, aristocratic looking man, dressed in the purple robe of the Procurators.

It is ever to be regretted, that the Capella del Rosario at *S. Giovanni e Paolo* was not better guarded on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1867. For on this day, and in that chapel, was burnt, together with one of the finest paintings of Giovanni Bellini, a picture by Titian, which, like no other, would have helped to complete the great qualities of the Assunta and of the Pala Pesaro: the Death of S<sup>t</sup> Peter Martyr. The picture which now occupies the place under the same name, is a late copy and, according to the judgement of all who have seen the original, quite unable to give an idea of the real value of Titian's work. Nowhere else had Titian so closely approached Michelangelo in the monumental grandeur of a few passionately agitated figures. (Michelangelo sojourned at that very time for a few months in Venice, as a fugitive.) Nor has Titian succeeded anywhere else in characterizing the surrounding landscape so completely as the witness of an affecting occurrence. I should like to refer the reader to the remarks written by Jacob Burckhardt in his *Cicerone* with reference to, and under the spell of, the original. Another splendid picture of the same period of Titian's activity (completed in 1533), that has not come down to us without injury, is the altarpiece of *Giovanni Elemosinario* in the church dedicated to him. We have to invoke the help of our fancy to imagine the spatial effect of the picture with its originally semi-circular top, which has unfortunately been cut off at a later date. The keen devotion expressed in the few figures of the Saint, the angel and the beggar, is truly touching. At the same time nowhere, perhaps, does the beauty of the harmony of blue, red and white, in which Titian used to delight, appear more clearly. From the same period dates an Annunciation of the Virgin, on the saircase of the *Scuola di San Rocco*, and the splendid picture of Tobias and the Angel at *San Marciliano*. Titian strikes a very different note in the large painting of the Presentation of the Virgin, which is now re-placed in the same position at the *Academy*, for which it was originally intended, when this room still belonged to the Scuola della Carità (in the years 1534—1538) (fig. 115). Here we find once more a resurrection of the old narrative art of Gentile Bellini and of Carpaccio in all the splendour of Titian's colour. In the midst of Venetian buildings—the wall of one of the houses immediately recalls the lozenge-shaped pattern on the Doges' Palace—a large crowd of people has collected, amongst them some senators, in order to watch the child Mary, as she ascends the broad steps of the staircase leading to the temple, full of reverend seriousness and yet a little droll withal. On the top of the staircase she is received by a benevolent, old high priest who is holding out his arms to her, accompanied by his adjuncts. The whole proceeding is depicted with the whole of Carpaccio's amiable

breadth, but also with the chastened sense of beauty of a great idealist. — At the Doges' Palace Titian is not exactly represented at his best. In 1523 he



Fig. 114. Titian. Madonna of the Casa Pesaro. S. Maria dei Frari.

had to execute a fresco of S<sup>t</sup> Christopher on the staircase which leads from the Doge's apartments to the *sala del senato*. It disappoints the beholder by its variegated colours and heavy shadows, and by the heavy, clumsy forms of the saintly giant. Nor does the famous *Fede* in the *sala delle quattro porte* bear comparison with most of the above-mentioned pictures. The beautiful personification of Christian faith is empty in expression and attitude, and the Doge kneeling before her is of exaggerated elegance. Titian who had the habit of working at his paintings in intervals, left this picture unfinished to his pupils.

The works which Titian created in his old age have a different character to those painted in his prime. The ingenuous joy of life has departed from them and has given way to an intensely serious conception: instead of the



Fig. 115. Titian. The Presentation of the Virgin. Academy.

brilliant local colours a warm, brownish harmony of tones; instead of the uniformly strong execution a loose, suggestive kind of representation. But the essential trait of his art remained, nay, it became more prominent, than before. And thus a general law of human nature is verified. For old age dispenses with many considerations which man admits of at the zenith of his life. Character then expresses itself with an ingenuousness which recalls the days of youth.

It almost seems to us like a reflection of his own, almost inexhaustible vitality, if we feel the character of Titian's later pictures to be that of a vigorous life. What now speaks to us is no longer the whirling enthusiasm of his *Assunta*, nor the blissful joy of life of many another picture of his early days, but defiant strength that laughs at the storms of life and at death. If Titian sometimes recalls Michelangelo, it is not so much superficial imitation, but the result of a certain elective affinity — notwithstanding the essential difference of their artistic aims.



The Martyrdom of S<sup>t</sup> Laurence at the *Gesuiti* in Venice is praised, and rightly so, as the most important work of this last period. It is true, the picture, which in itself is already sombre, has darkened and been painted over and is insufficiently lighted, so that full daylight (about midday) is needed for judging its merits. But then will be revealed the greatness of expression in the features of S<sup>t</sup> Laurence, suffering and yet certain of victory. He reconciles us to the horrible demeanour of the wildly agitated, naked myrmidons, just as the mild light of the star twinkling above does to the uncanny, smoky glow of the furnace-fire and of the torch. — The large picture of the Descent of the Holy Ghost, which is preserved at the *Salute* church, is disappointing after the mighty impression of the altarpiece of S<sup>t</sup> Laurence. The general movement appears here superficially only, not expressed as the outcome of the same inner necessity, though we can quite imagine, that such a picture painted in a broad liquid manner, must have particularly impressed the next generation of artists. In the sacristy of the same church are a few boldly foreshortened ceiling-pictures (Cain slaying Abel, David and Goliath, Sacrifice of Isaac). At *S. Salvatore* are two magnificent pictures of the Transfiguration and the Annunciation, both filled with grand life, the latter the most beautiful realization of this subject among the different versions painted by Titian in the course of his life. The *Academy* also has two of the most valuable pictures of Titian's late period: S<sup>t</sup> John the Baptist, a seriously handsome, severe looking preacher in the wilderness, who with powerful gesture is addressing the people — and his last picture: the *Pietà* (fig. 116). How many times may not the old man of nearly a hundred years of age have sat before this canvas, until the deadly plague took the brush from his hand! A pupil, Palma Giovine, has completed, what the master was not allowed to complete. But from behind his brushmarks, from behind the touching-up and dirt of centuries, shines once more the genius, admiration of whose works has often left us speechless. The idea of this composition is grand. Under the shimmering gold of a domed niche Mary is seated erect like a princess with an expression of sublime grief, holding in her arms the body of her Son. On the right kneels Joseph of Arimathia, seizing full of humble love the hand of the dead Master; from the left Magdalen rushes forward, wild despair in her aspect. Thus in the three living the same feeling is touchingly expressed in three different variations. We would willingly credit Palma with the accessories, the little angel with the chrismatory, and the stone effigies of Moses and of Christian Faith.

It is one of the peculiarities of the works of great masters, that they bear the character of necessity, like the works of nature. In looking at them we feel, that everything must be thus and in no way different. This applies in full measure to Titian, but not to the majority of the Venetian painters of his time,

though some of them were not afraid of entering into competition with the aged prince of painters. Such an one was *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone* (1483—1540). Born in Friuli, he came as a young man to Venice, where he developed under the auspices of the triple-star Giorgione, Palma and Titian. We do not know whether he had ever entered into intimate relations with either of them as a pupil. Pordenone had a sense of colour, which came near to



Fig. 116. Titian. *Pietà*. Academy.

that of those masters; he knew how to depict a healthy beauty which looked for more masculine than that of Palma; but his special merit was a powerful energy in the conception of everything that he painted. Yet he was not the equal of either of those three. He lacked harmony, true originality and even taste. We often note in his work that purposeless and senseless movement which is a characteristic of nearly all the masters of the late renaissance, because they had the erroneous notion, that quietness of the composition is tedious. This very expressionless life makes us so indifferent to his large chief work of the

Patriarch Giustiniani with four other Saints, at the *Academy*, although we do not wish to deny the solid qualities of drawing, colouring and effective light (fig. 117). The Academy also has from his brush the large Madonna of the Carmelites and a few less important paintings; *San Rocco* the boldly foreshortened single figures of SS. Martin and Christopher; and *S. Maria degli Angeli* at *Murano* a feeble, late picture of the Annunciation. His altarpiece of St Roch with SS. Catherine and Sebastian at *S. Giovanni Elemosinario* again did not come up to Titian's beautiful and simple painting of the saintly patron of the church, in spite of all Pordenone's efforts and to his fierce anger. The pictures which Pordenone had executed for the hall of the Great Council, have perished in the fateful fire of 1577, and all that remains of his Venetian frescoes is some faint traces in the cloister of *San Stefano*.

*Sebastiano del Piombo* was more tasteful and more happily gifted, than Pordenone; on the other hand he was even more lacking in that high necessity of artistic expression. This is best proved by the great change of front with he made. The only eclectic among the Venetians of his time, he betrayed in his maturity the colouring of Giorgione to the mighty style of Michelangelo's forms. The works which he has created in his thus improved manner in Rome, are certainly most important in some cases, but never entirely pleasing. After all, he never came nearer the great Michelangelo, than any clever epigone might have done, whilst he lost more and more of the freshness of his Venetian colouring. We much prefer to dwell upon the great picture of his early days, which still remains in Venice: the altarpiece of St John Chrysostomus in the church dedicated to this Saint (fig. 118). Dignified and serious the pious old man sits at his desk, absorbed in his writing, and oblivious of all that passes around him, when from the left approach three of the most beautiful, dark-eyed Venetian women, disguised as SS. Catherine, Magdalen and Agnes, whilst a curly youth in the garb of St John the Baptist meets them with languishing eyes. Thus a kind of naive sensuality is mingled quite naturally with the devoutness of the religious picture. And this is thoroughly Venetian. The warm colouring, the fulness of the drapery and the type of the men's faces betray the school of Giorgione. We may well ask, what would have become of Giorgione, had he remained in Venice after such a promising beginning.

From about the same time dates the splendid picture of the Pietà at the Academy, which is ascribed to *Rocco Marconi*, owing to analogies with his signed pictures at *S. Giovanni e Paolo* (Christ between SS. Andrew and Paul) and at the *Royal Palace* (Christ and the Adulteress) (fig. 119). The clearness of the atmosphere above the carefully painted landscape and a certain embarrassment in the expression of the beautiful faces in the foremost group show the master to have been one who still stood on the soil of the quattrocento. The



same applies to *Paris Bordone*, how ever much he may demean himself as pupil of Titian. His principal early work at the *Academy*, which describes the scene of a fisherman handing the ring of S<sup>t</sup> Mark to the Doge, is still entirely conceived in the spirit of the quattrocento. As with Gentile Bellini or Carpaccio, the point of sight is chosen very high, in order to show the beholder as much



Fig. 117. Pordenone. S. Lorenzo Giustiniani surrounded by Saints. Academy.

as possible without effort on his part. The picture is rather fine and carefully executed in a warm reddish tone, but all the same one questions oneself, whether it deserve the high praise of Jacob Burckhardt who considered it "the best-painted ceremonial picture" in the world. We miss in it naive freshness, and in many of the figures individual life (fig. 120). Wherever Bordone tries to master greater tasks or to emulate the leading masters of Venice in pictorial treatment, he is most unfortunate, almost fatally so. Vide the Last Supper at

*S. Giovanni in Bragora*, the Paradise at the *Academy* or the restless, agitated body of Christ at the *Doges' Palace*! He felt most at home, when he had to paint a portrait. He then disposed of his task with honest simplicity and with an innate sense of beauty which sometimes succeeded in producing imposing results. But of such pictures, to the best of our knowledge, none are to be



Fig. 118. Sebastiano del Piombo. St John Chrysostomus. S. Giovanni Crisostomo.

found any more in Venice. The only picture in Venice, that is apt to alter our opinion of Bordone which we have just expressed, is so grandly conceived, that we feel inclined to ascribe at least the composition to another master, to *Giorgione* for preference.



Fig. 119. Rocco Marconi (?). Pietà. Academy.

The Central Italian painters of second rank had to suffer from the circumstance, that they had to follow the idealistic style of some few leading masters, without being able to cope with the requirements of such a style. In Venice, where the artists took a far more ingenuous attitude towards nature, talents of this kind were also able to achieve most valuable results in their own way, if their ambition was not too high. If their powers were insufficient for church painting in grand style, the Venetian public was quite contented, if they depicted in a naive manner and with pleasing breadth scenes from every-day life, and



landscapes. Such was the task chosen by the groups of artists which were formed by the families of the *Bonifazi* and the *Bassani*. They have achieved the importance of pioneers, for they were the first genre painters and landscape painters of Italy. It is true, they had in Venice a whole succession of artistic ancestors, upon whose work they could base their own. In no other school of Italy had as much care been devoted to the landscape background, as here, and nowhere else had the artists of the quattrocento given as much loving attention to their daily surroundings, as Gentile Bellini and Carpaccio had done in Venice. However, the religious import of their representations had always been the chief concern of these worthy quattrocentists. This conviction we feel far more rarely with the Bonifazi, and hardly ever with Jacopo Bassano and his sons. With them the religious meaning is no longer the subject of, but only a pretext for their art. Surely the wealthy nobles of Venice rejoiced in seeing themselves so faithfully and pleasingly depicted by Bonifazio, or in finding again in Bassano's pictures their country-seats on the continent, the juicy meadows enlivened by shepherds, the farmhouses in the shade of old trees, and all the places where they loved to spend the hot months of the Summer. The preference of the townsman for country-life, which is tinged with a trace of sentimentality, became general at that time in Italy and found its reflection in art in the pictures of the Bassani. From the great number of pictures by these artists, which have come down to us, we may draw our conclusions as to their popularity. The Venetians have certainly always lauded a Giorgione in higher terms, but the Bonifazi and Bassani were indemnified by that wide popularity which is always, the greatest reward for mediocre talents that know how to meet the taste of the public. In sacred and profane interiors, which elsewhere in Italy would have been decorated with frescoes, the long canvases of these painters were hung by side in long rows. Like many an one of the great Venetian artists, the Bonifazi and the Bassani were not children of the city of Venice. The first *Bonifazio*, who was not rivalled by any of his successors, was of Veronese origin, as is indicated already by his surname. After a life of probably fifty years he died in Venice in 1540. He reveals himself unmistakably as a pupil of Palma, from whom he derives the calm beauty of his women and the warmth of his colour. A delightful golden green, which was frequently used by Bonifazio, seems to have been a general secret of colour shared by all the Venetian painters of that period. In his method of painting Bonifazio employs a soft *sfumato*, even to a higher degree than Palma. If the attitude of his figures and his grouping make us feel the absence of Palma's incomparable sense of beauty, he delights us on the other hand by many small traits which he naively introduces. In his intentions he sometimes seems to be near the Dutch genre-painters of the seventeenth century, but his expression had of

necessity to become far more elegant in the artistic atmosphere, in which he lived. Of his pictures at the *Academy* the most valuable and famous is the parable of the rich man who, with Italian refinement, is represented rather as a reveller in artistic, than in material pleasures. Sometimes Bonifazio admitted the help of a younger relative of the same name, who pursued the same aims with less ability. Such joint works of both masters are among the pictures at the Academy: the Adoration of the Magi, the Judgement of Salomon, and Christ and the



Fig. 120. Bordone. A Fisherman hands the ring of St Mark to the Doge. Academy. Venice.

Adulteress. Of *Bonifazio II.* alone the Academy has a rather important work in his Madonna sitting with the Infant under a tree between SS. Joseph, Jerome and Catharine. The third Bonifazio who was born in Venice — perhaps as a son of one of his two elder namesakes — shows the art of the family already degenerating into triteness. Of his ten panels with pairs of Saints, at the *Academy*, the most pleasing is perhaps the one which shows in effective contrast S<sup>t</sup> Bernard in a heavy priest's cloak by the side of the slender figure of S<sup>t</sup> Sebastian (fig. 121).

Of the Venetian private collection that of *Lady Layard* owns a series of twelve small pictures by the elder Bonifazio which demand attention, if only for their subject, as documents for the history of civilisation. They depict the rural occupations in a similar way to that of the old German calendar pictures of the twelve months.

The *Da Ponte* family, called *Bassano* from their native place, has been honoured with one of the largest rooms of the Venice Academy. Through numerous works we can here get acquainted with all the three members of the family: *Jacopo*, the father, who had emigrated from the little provincial town, and his Venetian sons *Francesco* and *Leandro*. Jacopo, who had received his first instruction in art in his native place from his father, formed his definite style later in the workshop of the elder Bonifazio, from whom he learnt that naive art of relating a story, in which he afterwards even surpassed his master, and also the supple manner of pictorial delivery in brilliant colours. His real domain was the landscape picture enlivened by cattle and shepherds. As an animal painter he had no rival. Of course, we miss in him, to a surprising degree, the natural lightness of the colouring and of the shadows, which is peculiar to objects under an open sky, and which has been reinstated in its right by our modern open-air painters. Bassano's blue sky is still darker than Bonifazio's; his shadows have a blackish depth, from which the local colours — especially a ruby-coloured red — shine forth intensely like jewels. With all this Jacopo Bassano, and of his sons particularly Leandro, also maintain a certain position as portrait painters. Their portraits impress one as being very true to life, although they lack the noble conception of a Titian or a Tintoretto.

Whilst in every other part of Italy art was on a decline that could not be checked, especially since Michelangelo's late period, it continued to flourish in Venice with unabated splendour until the turn of the sixteenth century. Its standard-bearer was not only the aged, but ever fresh Titian, but by his side stood two other artists of the first order: *Tintoretto* and *Paolo Veronese*. Both of these left even Titian behind and solved new problems in a manner which had been unknown hitherto, thus leaving the impress of their personality upon that late period of Venetian art. Certainly there were equally great



talents at other places at that time, but they could not develop without hindrance in the direction for which they seemed predestined, because they fell under the irresistible spell of Michelangelo's superhuman power. His gigantic deeds found but a faint echo in Venice; nor was there a circle of connoisseurs and art-patrons who, lost in the contemplation of the remains of antiquity, would have obstinately preached again and again the eternal application of the laws of antique art. On the contrary, there was nothing in Venice to prevent the period of idealism to be followed by the healthy reaction of a naturalistic art. In the Bonifazii and the Bassani we have met the minor representatives of this direction. Tintoretto and Paolo Veronese had the higher destiny to reconcile the naturalistic method of representation with the problems of monumental painting. They also quite ingenuously clothed the saintly personages in the garb of their period. In the composition of their pictures they permitted themselves every liberty, wherever wall-painting was concerned. In painting a ceiling they only considered the architectural position in so far as they showed the scenes, as though they were seen from below



Fig. 121. Bonifazio Veronese III.  
St Bernhard and St Sebastian.

— not as completely so as Tiepolo, but still in strong foreshortening. Their technique in such work remained, with but few exceptions, that of oil-painting on canvas. The result of it was, that a grouping of smaller pictures in heavy framework was preferred to homogeneous, large ceiling-pictures.

The older of the two masters was *Jacopo Robusti* who, on account of his father's profession as a dyer, was given the name *Tintoretto* (1518—1592).

Above the door of his workshop he had written the motto: *Il disegno di Michelangelo, il colorito di Tiziano*. But in reality he was better, than this motto would lead one to believe. He was by no means merely a clever eclectic, but a splendid personality of polished style. He possessed to a high degree the most precious of artistic gifts — imagination, added to which he had acquired by patient study an unusual knowledge of the human body and such sureness in the rendering of effects of light, that one might believe him to have been able to make the sun shine or to conjure up thunder-clouds. That he added a fine sense of colour to these other qualities, almost goes without saying in the case of a Venetian. The sum total of these gifts resulted with Tintoretto in a facility of production which had hitherto been unheard-of in Venice. We willingly believe that he could show ten times more area of painted canvas, than Titian. But at the same time Tintoretto was full of the consciousness of being able to outshine Titian in a certain sense as regards the idealism of his art. He gave expression to the feeling of power and intensified life, which was one of the characteristics of his time. In this he may have felt akin to Michelangelo, whose drawing he professed to emulate. Such an endeavour may very easily lead to empty exaggeration, as is proved by all the direct followers of Michelangelo. But Tintoretto was saved from this by his healthy naturalism. The slender elegance alone in the proportions of his figures forbade exaggerated manifestations of power, instead of which Tintoretto pleases us by an elegant grace which does not clash with the vivacity of movements.

Of great interest, artistically and as regards the history of civilization, appears to us his realism in religious subjects. It is true, that an evangelically religious mind will always take offence at the fearless realism which deliberately introduces ordinary modern, nay coarse, traits into the representations of the Crucifixion or the Last Supper. One's opinion may, however, undergo a change, if one brings before one's mind the fact that the Church, which was shaken in its very foundations, shrank from no means of reestablishing the hold of religious ideas upon the consciousness of humanity, which had become entirely wordly. Next to bewildering splendour, it was particularly the coarsest naturalness, which had to serve to produce an impression. Tintoretto appears the more as one of the most distinguished artistic representatives of this so-called counter-reformation, as he followed the tendency of the period entirely voluntarily.

To this must be added, that with his art of light and colour he knows how to reconcile, where he has offended by gross naturalism. This can be established step by step in the *Scuola di San Rocco* which, with its sixty-two pictures by Tintoretto, has become a veritable temple of fame for his art. Sometimes, when the subject permitted a preponderance of landscape, the

realist actually turns into an imaginative poet who knows by magic effects of light how to transform a simple forest glade with a flowing brooklet into a fairyland. (Vide his *Maria aegyptiaca* in the wilderness) (fig. 122). Tintoretto has as an especial importance as a portraitist — many art-lovers wrongly consider this side of his art as the greatest. Although he depicts his sitters not quite as happily and freshly as Titian, his style is nevertheless broad and free (fig. 123). Although the decline of Venice had long set in, her nobles were still, if we may judge from Tintoretto, a dignified and proud race. A fault which may, however, be found with these portraits is, that they make one feel the want of intimate study of personal character. And this fault is closely connected with a far more serious reproach which has been levelled against Tintoretto. He worked with a fervour which often led him to superficial haste. He is responsible for quite a number of pictures which are dashed off in a manner which can only be described as unscrupulous (f. i. the altarpieces at *S. Giorgio Maggiore*). Perhaps it is one of the results of so hurried a proceeding, that most of his pictures — except the earlier ones — have lost much of their original lightness and freshness of colour. No other Venetian painter has suffered so much from subsequent darkening of the colours.

These few remarks should be considered in view of the pictures of Tintoretto which will be encountered everywhere in Venice. As it is impossible here to give a detailed account of the vast number of even the important ones among them, the writer will only mention a few which appeared to him particularly characteristic. Of Tintoretto's early time, which was still bathed in a reflection of Titian's sunny beauty of colour, the *Academy* has (in the Sala dell' Assunta) the beautiful pictures of Adam and Eve, and Cain slaying Abel. Below these hangs a chief work, painted a little later, — the *Miracle of S<sup>t</sup> Mark who saves*



Fig. 122. Tintoretto. *St Mary in the Wilderness*. Scuola di San Rocco.



a slave threatened with death. The Saint who comes flying which his head downwards may be objected to by whoever likes; but this must not spoil the pleasure we take in the beautifully painted figure of the slave and in the splendid, dramatically described crowd surrounding the victim with expressions of surprise, doubt and menace (fig. 124). From the same period probably date the two colossal paintings in the chapel of the choir of *Santa Maria dell' Orto*, the church which holds Tintoretto's tomb. The pictures, which describe with



Fig. 123. Tintoretto. Portrait of the Doge Alvise Mocenigo. Academy.

brilliant imagination the Worship of the golden Calf and the Last Judgement, have always excited loud admiration, especially among artists. In the same church, on the chief altar, is the nobly conceived Martyrdom of S<sup>t</sup> Agnes. Among Tintoretto's works at the *Royal Palace* (Old Library), the pictures of the philosophers (Diogenes, Archimedes) belong to his early period. The small collection of pictures in the sacristy of the *Salute* counts among its most treasured pieces the Marriage of Cana which Tintoretto painted in 1561 and by way of exception signed with his name. His Last Supper at *S. Giorgio Maggiore* is

grand in its lighting, and remarkable at least in the boldly individual conception of the scene, although some traits, like the dog gnawing a bone in the foreground, have, as may well be understood, been objected to (fig. 125). From 1560 until towards the end of his life Tintoretto was occupied with the decoration of the *Scuola di San Rocco*. Among these canvases, some of which are gigantic, are many that will hardly hold our attention, but others count among the most important of Tintoretto's pictorial achievements. His Crucifixion (1565) will always remain one of the most remarkable representations of this



Fig. 124. Tintoretto. The Miracle of St Mark. Academy.

moving event. With great breadth and entirely reckless realism all the minor details are here depicted, without in any way making the description of the chief action in the central group appear in a trivial light (fig. 126). Among the pictures of the adjoining lower hall, the passionately agitated rendering of the Massacre of the Innocents and the fantastic landscape of St Mary in Egypt have probably found most admirers (fig. 122). On the staircase the Visitation forms a worthy counterpart to Titian's beautiful Annunciation. In the upper hall, which on the whole does not contain many pleasing things, will be found an excellent portrait of himself by Tintoretto, of the year 1573.—Whilst he was occupied on this gigantic labour, he still found time to complete a number



of pictures for churches and to take a share in the pictorial decoration of the *Doges' Palace* (fig. 127). He is found in all the rooms of state; to his disadvantage he is here exposed to the vicinity of Paolo Veronese who, with his more quiet beauty and his more brilliant colours, generally gains the favour of the beholder. Among the best of Tintoretto's pictures are those in the *Sala dell' Anticollégio* (*Vulcan's Forge* and *Bacchus and Ariadne*) and in the *Sala del Collegio* (the votive pictures of the Doges kneeling before the Virgin and the Saviour). In the *Last Supper*, in the Hall of the Great Council, the aged master once more rises to a grand effort. Truly surprising is the art with which a mass of figures, such as had never before been depicted, is



Fig. 125. Tintoretto. The last Supper. S. Giorgio Maggiore.

articulated more by light and atmosphere, than by the lines of the composition. Many details, notably some of the women's heads, are of supreme beauty: but it is true that this ceaseless turmoil gives one nowhere time to breathe. When the picture was just completed and shone in untarnished freshness of colour, it earned the enthusiastic praise of the Venetian aristocracy. To-day, of course, imagination has to freshen up much that has darkened or faded since.

By the side of Tintoretto, completing him in many respects, stood *Paolo Cagliari* of Verona (1526—1588). His gifts were not as varied as Tintoretto's, his intentions not as ambitious, and yet posterity has given him more applause, because, unlike Tintoretto, he almost invariably attained the complete harmony between artistic intention and achievement — and therefore can be enjoyed



without effort. Heightened manifestations of life in the spirit of Tintoretto, or passionate movement of any kind, were avoided by Paolo Veronese, who preferred to depict the quiet happiness of a healthy and free existence. In this he remained faithful to the spirit of old Venetian painting, but he gave it a last and highest expression by representing this gay existence in a thoroughly monumental



Fig. 126. Tintoretto. Central Group of the Crucifixion. Scuola di San Rocco.

manner. He no longer introduces to us single, perfect individuals, but an entire people in Olympian well-being. The effect of the gay joy of life was with him doubly happy, because its bearers presented themselves to the spectator in the garb of his time. However—as may be gathered from the preceding remarks—Veronese's realism was purely superficial and without deeper intentions, like that of Tintoretto. It spends itself on the costume. And superficial is also all Veronese's beauty. He is not one of the painters who invite to deep

study. We may well admit this, although we gratefully acknowledge the sum total of content and happiness, which his art has given to the world.

In his technical methods of work Veronese was far more careful than his over-zealous rival. He allowed himself time, was not satisfied with the slick, wet painting over a dark ground, and thus saved for posterity far more of the original brilliancy of his colours. Very noteworthy is his art of composition.



Fig. 127. Tintoretto. St Margaret, St George and St Louis. Doges' Palace.

In his altarpieces he preferred to follow the famous example of Titian's Pala Pesaro and to arrange the groups in a diagonally ascending line, instead of disposing them horizontally. Above them he left — even in his broad pictures — plenty of air, far more than Tintoretto, and achieved by this means the impression of increased quietness and space. In this very respect the last of Venetian painters, Tiepolo, has learnt much from him.

The mediation of a compatriot procured the twenty-seven years old Cagliari, who had emigrated from Verona, his first important commission in Venice: the paintings for the ceiling at *San Sebastiano*. They met with so



much applause, that he was subsequently entrusted with the entire pictorial decoration of the church. In consequence the temple dedicated to the martyr became gradually the sanctuary of the gay muse of Veronese, who banishes all sad thoughts from her surroundings. Here it was, too, that the master found his last resting place, after having given the world his best during



Fig. 128. Paolo Veronese. Esther on her way to Ahasuerus. San Sebastiano.

decades of serious endeavour. — The ceiling pictures, in which his assistants have apparently a large share, describe the story of Queen Esther — most beautifully perhaps the boldly foreshortened procession of the Queen descending towards Ahasuerus (fig. 128). From the same period dates the ceiling picture of the sacristy, with the Coronation of the Virgin. The finest of the altarpieces adorns the high altar: S<sup>t</sup> Sebastian surrounded by five other Saints. Tied to a column, he raises, with an exquisite turn of the body, his head towards a



cloud which half overshadows him, and on which is enthroned the Virgin with the Infant, surrounded by music-making angels and cherubs. By the side of it, on the walls of the chapel of the choir, are the large pictures of the Martyrdom of St Sebastian and SS. Mark and Marcellinus on their way to the place of execution, the latter a splendid composition in diagonal direction (fig. 129). The large painting of the Feast in the house of Simon, the Pharisee, which Veronese had to paint for the refectory of the adjoining convent, has later found its way to the Brera in Milan.—The church of *Santa Caterina* guards as its greatest treasure the picture of the mystic marriage of its saintly patroness,



Fig. 129. Paolo Veronese. Martyrdom of St Sebastian. San Sebastiano.

which hangs over the high altar. On the steps leading to the throne of the Madonna kneels, regally adorned, the heavenly bride, a tall, fair woman in a flowing, blue silk-robe, over which falls the heavy cloak of gold brocade. No other Venetian painter knew, as he did, how to combine into a harmony the most varying colours in their full, brilliant depth. Especially remarkable is the predominant importance given sometimes — as in this picture — to blue: another contrast to Tintoretto (fig. 130). In the *Doges' Palace* Veronese receives us in the Sala dell' Anticollégio with one of his most lovable creations — the Rape of Europe (fig. 131). The scene, true enough, has not much the appearance of a rape, since the languishing princess seems only too pleased to mount the bull who obligingly squats down before her. As regards the actual abduction

which can be espied in the background, we are comforted by the cupids that escort them on the journey. In no other picture at the Doges' Palace has Veronese been again so happy. His fresco on the ceiling of the same room (Venetia enthroned), completed with the help of pupils, is spoilt in the colouring. The large Apotheosis of the Battle of Lepanto in the adjoining Hall of the Collegio is certainly very beautiful, especially in the lower group of the kneeling Doge Venier with his saintly escort. If only the Christ had less of the look of an unconcerned super! (fig. 132.) Much admiration is given to the splendid ceiling by Antonio da Ponte, with Veronese's allegorical figures in the panels. The "Industria" in particular, a woman fresh as a rose, smilingly watching a spider's web between her hands, attracts many a copyist (fig. 135). Of Veronese's remaining works in the Doges' Palace, most of the ceiling pictures from the Sala dei Dieci and the Sala della Bussola have found their way abroad; the Hall of the Great Council, on the other hand, still contains some fine wall and ceiling pictures, especially the centrepiece of the ceiling, the Apotheosis of Venetia. The goddess of the town, crowned with fame, is enthroned above the clouds, whilst spectators, noble women and heroes of war, are pressing below against the balustrade of a marble palace (fig. 133).

Among Veronese's pictures at the *Academy*, the Battle of Lepanto is remarkable as a dramatically agitated and lighted seapiece. The most beautiful of his Madonnas is probably the one in the Sala dell' Assunta, who, holding the Infant in her lap is enthroned in a niche above a high marble socle, surrounded by SS. Jerome, Justina and Francis who supports the child St John



Fig. 130. Paolo Veronese. Marriage of St Catharine.  
Sta Catarina.



the Baptist. Other Madonnas and Holy Families, which may be taken to be the work of Veronese's own brush, are at *S. Francesco della Vigna* and at *San Barnabà*. However, if we review the sum total of his artistic achievements, we must confess, that it was neither the sacred, nor the legendary

Fig. 131. Paolo Veronese, 'The Rape of Europe,' Doges' Palace, Sala dell' Anticollégio.



subject, nor the ceremonial picture, which best corresponded to Paolo Veronese's character. It was rather the feast picture, if we may use this expression. In this Paolo was and is inimitable. Never again has the banquet been depicted in art in so gay and at once so dignified a fashion, with such a mixture of naive ingenuousness and princely air in the demeanour of all the persons taking part in it. Everything on the luxuriously furnished board breathes sensual



pleasure—the sacred event, the description of which is the artist's avowed intention, is made entirely worldly—but the expression of sensuality is so subdued, so much ennobled by stately splendour, that every trace of vulgarity has disappeared. It is significant, that these pictures served for the adornment



Fig. 132. Paolo Veronese. From the "Memorial Picture of the Battle of Lepanto".  
Doges' Palace. Sala del Collegio.

of cloistral dining-rooms, where one might at any rate expect a different glorification of the common meal. Nearly all of them have drifted abroad, but one which counts among the best and largest, with splendid architectural painting, has remained in Venice: the Feast in the house of Levi. Placed

originally in the refectory of the convent of S. Giovanni e Paolo, it now adorns the narrow wall of one of the principal rooms at the *Academy* (fig. 134).

Tintoretto's and Paolo Veronese's great achievements were followed in

Fig. 133. Paolo Veronese. From "The Apotheosis of Venice". Doges' Palace. Sala del Maggior Consiglio.



Venetian painting by a century of decadence. The generations of artists that succeeded each other, are devoid of universal interest, and if the historical development had continued this course during the eighteenth century, we could here close our observations with a few remarks. But whilst in every other



part of Italy general exhaustion had set in in the domain of the fine arts, painting once more rose to short-lived splendour in Venice in the eighteenth century. In this sphere it was granted the Venetians again to celebrate triumphs, whilst in politics and in their national economy they could see nothing but degeneration, decline, and the forerunners of an approaching catastrophe. Nay, Venetian painting in the eighteenth century even brought forth a new achievement it had never before attained, by leaving us an almost complete picture of the town, of its inhabitants and culture.

Venice had always been one of the most picturesque cities of the world. What could have equalled in fantastic splendour the church of St Mark, the Doges' Palace, and their surroundings? — And again, was it possible to imagine more delightful street-views, than were offered at every step by the narrow network of canals and streets? — It is true, that the exterior of the lagoon-city had already at an earlier time inspired the imagination of her artistic sons. Gentile Bellini and Carpaccio have preserved for our benefit many a charming glimpse of old Venice; but they have only smuggled it, so to speak, into the backgrounds of their descriptive pictures, because according to the ideas of their time the portrayal of the town *per se* was not a task of art. This was only a discovery of the end of the seventeenth century. The first example was given by the paintings and etchings of *Luca Carlevaris*. However, the mere fact of having been the first constitutes his chief merit. His pictures, which have become very rare in Venice, are of little value. They lack the most precious quality of the true work of art, the soul of an artist's individuality. And this quality is just what we find in Carlevaris's successor and pupil, Antonio Canale (1697—1768). The elder Canaletto, as he has been called to distinguish him from his nephew with the same surname, has placed his whole life to the service of glorifying his native town. A number of pictures have come down to us, in which he depicts, apparently quite naively, all the well known views of Venice, which are to this day best liked by all travellers. Canaletto attached the greatest importance to every object and took care not to miss on any account a little window in one of his houses, so that everything could again be found in his picture, just as it was in reality. Nevertheless he painted with the soul of a Venetian, grouped his lights and shades in bold masses, to which end he made clever use of clouds, and reconciled all details with a warm, genuinely Venetian, golden tone of the atmosphere. It is truly lamentable, that Venice herself has kept hardly any of his works. The *Academy* possesses only one Canaletto (view of the Scuola di San Marco) and even this one is not beyond dispute. It is of course easy to understand, that foreigners of all people could appreciate these delightful views and carry them away as precious souvenirs of their visit. More than



this, one cannot suppress the suspicion, that Canaletto and the other painters of views have painted expressly for the foreign visitors and did not lose sight of business, whilst pursuing their artistic aims. Whilst *Canaletto the younger*,

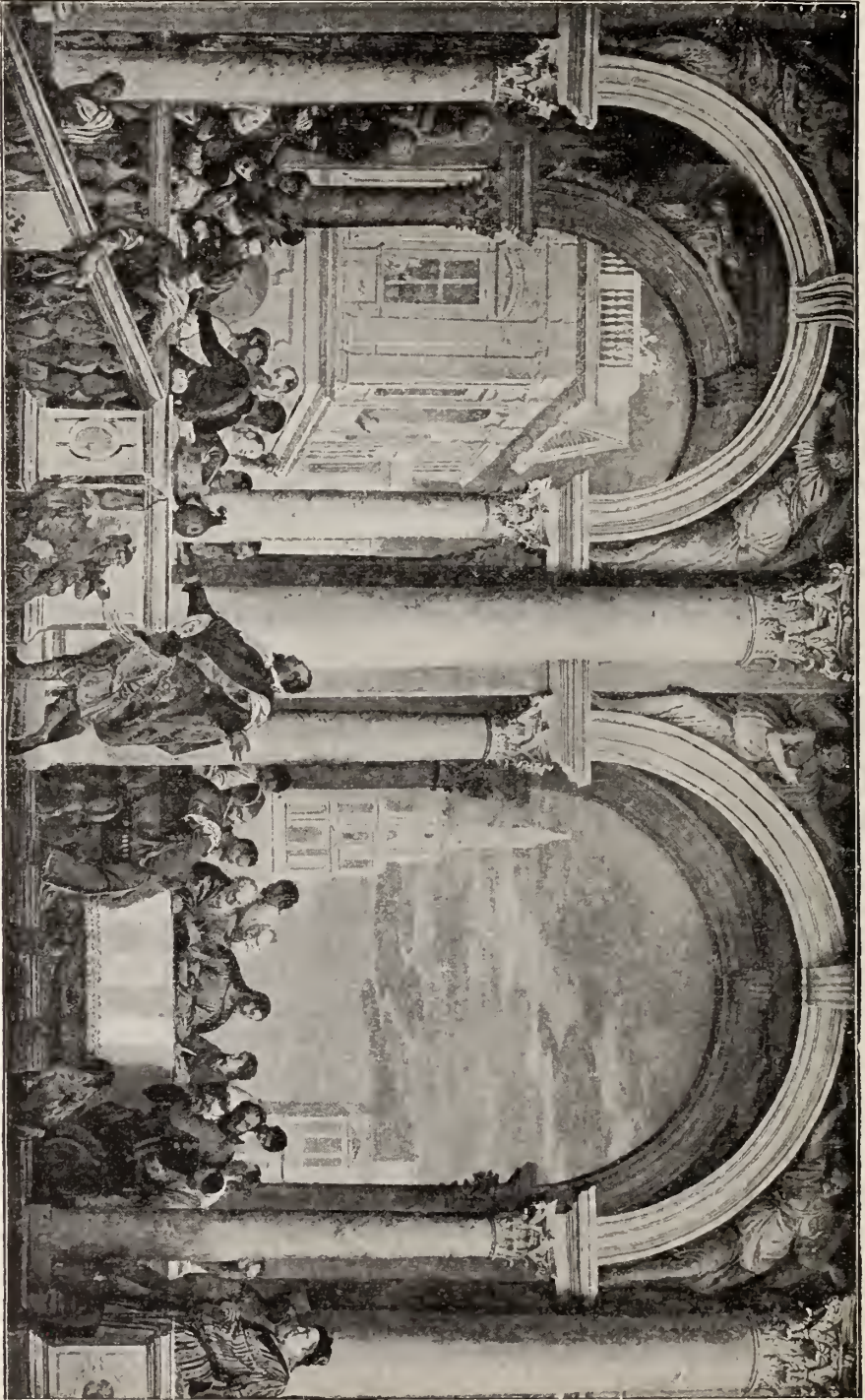


Fig. 134. Paolo Veronese. From "Jesus in the House of Levi". Academy.

who can only be properly known outside Venice, especially in Germany, with his pedantic style signifies a retrogression in the direction of his uncle's art, *Francesco Guardi* signifies a distinct advance. He, too, is only poorly represented in Venice, by two small pictures at the *Museo Correr* and one at the *Academy*. His pictures often show us the same views as Canaletto's. But the artistic treatment is different. Guardi has overcome the childlike interest in objects. The view has become his motif which he treats with ease and brilliantly — sometimes with the clear impress of some personal mood. His



Fig. 135. Paolo Veronese. Allegory of Diligence. Ceiling of the Sala del Collegio. Doges' Palace.

broad and liquid brushwork and the tender, silvery tone of his landscapes are the delight of collectors who know full well, how much modern French landscape art owes the old Venetian of the age of pigtailed.

If Canaletto and Guardi have described, each in his own way, but with equal truth, the Venice of their time, *Pietro Longhi* describes the Venetians. This, too, was not new in itself. Those very masters of the early renaissance whom we have called the forerunners of the painters of views — Gentile Bellini and Carpaccio have conjured up their compatriots before our eyes as clearly, as we may well wish to see them. And later, Titian and Tintoretto, though they have not portrayed the people, have depicted the aristocracy of Venice in a



number of worthy representatives. At Longhi's time the artists' style of representation had, of course, undergone a change, but even more so the character of their models. The Venetians, whom Longhi painted, were no longer the fresh, active men, the robust women of Carpaccio; nor were they the dignified nobili of Tintoretto; but they were a race of careless and effeminate idlers. Their outward bearing shows, that they know of no high aims, of no serious duties. Their days were spent in caring for their *toilette*, in gossip, in music and dance, in masquerades and love intrigues. Thus they were painted by Longhi, and thus they also appear in the chronicles of that period. Longhi as an artist was one of their number. He, too, lacked seriousness and high ambition. His personalities look so absent-minded, that they do not even devote full attention to their gallant occupations. One might therefore hesitate to mention Longhi's name at all in a list of great artists, if he were not so interesting a figure in the history of civilization. And furthermore it must be admitted, that he knew how to deliver his little anecdotes with the most amiable sense of humour. If you are overwhelmed by great art, you can take rest with Longhi. You will then learn to appreciate the fine sense of colour which had come to him as the heritage of a long succession of artistic ancestors. If you want to form a correct estimate of Longhi, you have to compare him with his contemporary Chodowiecki, who revealed a very similar talent in different surroundings. Longhi has also been compared with Hogarth, but, it seems to me, with less reason, for the Englishman was decidedly deeper, both as man and as artist. A number of Longhi's little pictures can be found at the *Academy* and at the *Museo Correr*. That he was induced to relate his *storiottes* also *al fresco* — on the staircase of the *Palazzo Grassi* — is somewhat comical, but everybody must admit, that he has solved his task in an original and excellent manner.

What there was of idealism in Venetian civilization at that period, is personified in *Giovanni Battista Tiepolo* (1696—1770). The nobles of the Republic were certainly corrupted to the very marrow of their bones, but they were still filled with the whole pride of their ancestors. They were still wealthy — through landed property and inheritance in conjunction with gradual diminution of the families — and their superiority found expression in boastful extravagance. Never had the palaces been as large, the tombs of the Doges as pompous. Tiepolo's painting corresponded to this striving after monumental splendour. That he had hit upon the right thing for his time, is proved by the enthusiastic praise of his contemporaries and by the quantity and importance of his orders. In the Doges' Palace, it is true, hardly anything remained to be done. On the other hand the nobles of the city and of the *terra ferma* ordered large mural paintings for their palaces; further opportunities for such works were offered



by the churches. Foreign countries, too, demanded Tiepolo's works. He has devoted a few years to the decoration of the castle at Würzburg and died finally as painter to the Spanish Court in Madrid. Now, although the saying goes, that he "who has satisfied the best of his time, has lived for all time", this does not prevent the best of the next generation to hold generally a



Fig. 136. Tiepolo. Antony and Cleopatra. Palazzo Labbia.

different view from that of the best of the time of their fathers. Goethe's contemptuous judgement of Tiepolo is well known; it was shared by the cultured connoisseurs of his time and is repeated by many even to-day. Faulty drawing, lack of expression and feeble ideas in conjunction with daring handling, are the reproaches which have been levelled against Tiepolo since Goethe's days. There is some reason for each of these reproaches, but the fault lay not so

much in Tiepolo, as in the unreasonable demands made upon him. To realize his artistic intentions Tiepolo was fully furnished with talent and with artistic culture. He may well have been guilty of faulty drawing, may have represented his men and women more as types, than as individuals, and yet achieve his object of brilliant effect of space. Nay, as decorator Tiepolo signifies a final, highest advance.

There are two opposite ways, in which mural painting can solve its problems in a classic manner—either by explaining and accompanying in severe style the architectural articulation, or by breaking boldly through the architecture and treating wall or ceiling as open space, in which some occurrence takes place, which it describes realistically.

The artist who embarks in this latter direction, must acknowledge in Tiepolo one of his greatest models. Nobody else has known how to master the largest spaces and achieve such homogeneous effects with such ease, nay grace. Only Paolo Veronese of all his precursors can be compared with him. We have already pointed out, how Paolo achieved greater depth by the atmosphere which he left over his groups. But in the use of this device he appears a mere duffer by the side of Tiepolo. Tiepolo knows how to make us gaze into endless depths of space by the art with which he distributes small groups and single figures—with matchless taste—at wide intervals. They float about, light, bathed in atmosphere. And how well Tiepolo knows how to paint this atmosphere! In his ceiling pictures the sky is opened. It is a fact which has often been observed, that a ceiling by Tiepolo makes the whole room appear loftier and wider, than it actually is.

The objective side is on the whole intirely indifferent to him. We need not lose time over the allegorical twaddle of the eighteenth century. It is really quite immaterial, whether Tiepolo had to paint the Transportation of the House of the Virgin to Loreto (at the *Scalzi*), or the Finding of the Cross (at the *Academy*), or Pegasus unfettered (in the *Palazzo Labbia*). The way of thinking of his time not only permitted, but demanded, that every subject—religious, allegorical, or historical—if it was to be presented in monumental style, had to be raised to the same Olympian height, and furnished with the same finery of angels or cupids and flowing, silken robes. Even if the occurence must needs take place on level ground, it was given that heroic magnificence. Especially in such a case the impression upon our mind is entirely theatrical. Observe the intentional *grandezza*, with which Antony and Cleopatra meet on the frescoes of the Palazzo Labbia (fig. 136). Tiepolo was not a born painter of easel pictures. He lacked completely the sense of deep observation, which is required for this. But this is by no means to imply, that his smaller pictures are without charm. Far from it! They have the same qualities as his large

paintings. But for this very reason they look like much reduced ceiling or mural paintings. Such pictures are at the *Academy*: the Vision of St Cajetan, St Joseph with the Infant Saviour and four Saints.

With Tiepolo the great art of Venice came to an end. A generation after his death the brittle structure of the Republic of St Mark collapsed. If it had been only the collapse of senile political institutions, there would be no reason for bewailing this catastrophe. But the debris also buried a high culture and art, which were firmly rooted in the soil of Venice. — When after the lapse of many decades there came a return of orderly conditions, when Venice was given back to her resuscitated fatherland, her rich nobles had long ceased to exist, and with them the arts which would have ennobled the leisure of these lords. — It must not be misunderstood — much chiselling and painting is still done in Venice. But of these works of art only the models are Venetian.



Fig. 137. Rio delle Erbe and Palazzo Sanudo-Vanaxel.



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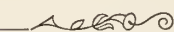
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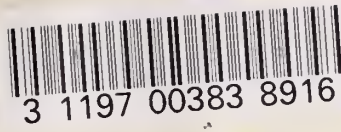
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